

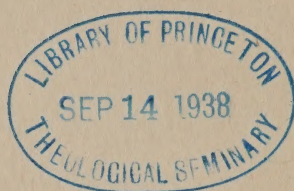
BS1196 .4.H82

The priests and prophets,

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 00011 9885



BS1196

A.H82

THE
PRIESTS AND PROPHETS



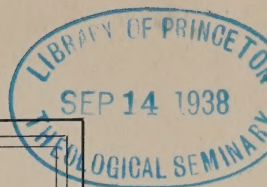
THE
PRIESTS
AND
PROPHETS

BY
JACOB HOSCHANDER



NEW YORK
THE JEWISH THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY OF AMERICA

1938



THE
PRIESTS
AND
PROPHETS

COPYRIGHT, 1938, BY
THE JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
OF AMERICA

COMPOSED, PRINTED AND BOUND BY THE
HADDON CRAFTSMEN, INC., CAMDEN, N.J.

It had been the intention of my beloved Husband to dedicate this work to Doctor Cyrus Adler, who had been his friend ever since his arrival in this country, and to have this finished in 1933, on the occasion of Doctor Adler's seventieth birthday. His illness prevented the carrying out of this plan, but in pious fulfillment of his wish I do now dedicate this work to Doctor Cyrus Adler.

BERTHA HOSCHANDER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

The priestly class *Kemārîm*—The abolition of their priestly office—Solomon's foreign sanctuaries—Their purpose—The foreign priests of these sanctuaries—The ancestral religion of the Canaanites under Solomon's reign—Their status as aliens—Their treatment—Their support of Jeroboam—The Aryan Hittites—Their religious influence—The Hittite "bull-god"—The Baalim-worship—Jeroboam's syncretistic Jahveh-worship—The religious attitude of the Israelites—Jeroboam's Canaanitic military force—His election—The loyal adherents of the Davidic dynasty in North-Israel—The recognition of the Canaanites as equal citizens—Their anomalous position among the Israelites—The amalgamation of the Canaanitic and Israelitish creeds—Jeroboam's own religious conception—The identification of Jahveh with Baal—The Baalim representatives and emanations of the ancient supreme god of Palestine—Historical parallels in Israel's history—The priests of Jeroboam's sanctuaries—The priestly rank of kings and chiefs—The position of the Levitical priests—Jeroboam's priestly schools—The Festival of Jahveh as God of agriculture in the 8th month—The position of the Vernal Equinox in Taurus—The *Asheroth* and *Asherim*—No *Asherah* in Jeroboam's sanctuaries—His innovations of a ritual character—The veneration of his memory by the pious Jehu-dynasty—The attitude of the prophets toward his innovation—The origin of the Mosaic rituals—The three religious stages—The Mosaic Monotheism—State-Monotheism and National Monotheism—The identification of the Baalim with the Host of heaven—The Heavenly Court in the visions of the prophets—Jeremiah's monotheistic conception—Deutero-Isaiah's rigid Monotheism—The belief in angels and Monotheism—Zechariah's and Daniel's conception of angels—The definition of angels by Maimonides.

PAGE 1

CHAPTER II

The popular conception of religion—The prophetic teachings—The ill success of the prophetic activity—Isaiah's view on sacrifices and rituals—Ritualistic performances by immoral persons—The breach between the prophets and the priests—Idealism versus Realism—The liberal attitude of the priests—The piety of Judean kings due to their influence—Their chief function of teaching—"Their teaching for hire"—The protest of

Micah—The ignorance of the poor—The priestly principle of Truth and Peace—Different views concerning external forms of worship—The divine origin of the priestly ordinances—The statement of Amos on sacrifices—Its various interpretations—Hosea's view—The erroneous interpretation of Isaiah's views on rituals—Micah's position—His fundamental religious principles—Psalm 15—Micah's Messianic message—Jeremiah's conception concerning sacrifices—Its correct interpretation—His exhortation on Sabbath-observance—The priestly prophet Joel—His concern for the regularity of sacrifices—The date of the drought—Jeremiah's reference to the same event—A comparison of Jeremiah's address with that of Joel—Joel a true representative of the priests—His style—The criterion of a true prophet—The conditional nature of prophecy—The priestly prophet Ezekiel.

PAGE 56

CHAPTER III

The conception of piety and religious devotion in antiquity—Moral conduct as the consequence of religious observances—Demands beyond human power—An excessive number of rituals—The symbolic character of rituals—A perfect state of human society—The fear of punishment—The principle "Fear of the Lord"—Its rare occurrence in the prophetic literature—"The Knowledge of the Lord"—The investigation of its meaning—Hosea's "Knowledge of the Lord"—The covenant as connubial relationship—*Hesed* and *Emeth*—Ideal Israel—The Remnant—Isaiah's "Knowledge of the Lord"—The covenant as filial relationship—The rebellion against a natural law—The Messianic attribute—The misinterpretation of the Messianic prophecy—Jeremiah's "Knowledge of the Lord"—The term *Emūnah*—Habakkuk's principle of *Emūnah*—The definition of this term—Jeremiah's disappointment—His doctrine of individual responsibility—Israel divorced—Their claim of filial relationship—The difference between Hosea and Jeremiah—Belief and Knowledge—Jeremiah's own definition of "the Knowledge of the Lord"—"The Knowledge of the Lord" gained by human experience—Faith in the ancestors—The fifth commandment—Propagation of national creeds among other nations—The testimony of written documents—The ethical value of knowledge gained by experience—The short-lived nature of Israel's faith—Israel's faith in the Lord compared with that of Abraham—The faith on evidence of a cumulative nature—The religious conceptions of Love and Fear—The ephemeral nature of empiric knowledge—The want of faith—Israel's faith in the non-Israelitish creeds—Israel's claim to the property of their ancestors—The guilt of the corrupt worshippers of Jahveh compared with that of the apostates—The firm belief in Jahveh's power—Superstition—The prophets challenged to verify their predictions—The fundamental import of the conditional nature of prophecy—The plea of repentance—Isaiah's induction into the prophetic office—The obscure contents of his message—The New Testament interpretation—Isaiah's activity out of harmony with his induction

[viii]

—The doom of Northern Israel—No justification for a message of doom—The survival of Israel—The holy seed—Jahveh's righteous anger—The part of a seducer.

PAGE 101

CHAPTER IV

The prohibition of prophetic activities—The danger to the ruling classes—The force of habits—The priests of the Jahveh-sanctuaries—The leaders of fashion—The ubiquity of moral corruption in the past—Imitation of heathen customs—The principle of equality—Its renunciation—The rise of a nobility—The feudal system in Israel—Inequality the fundament of Israel and Judah—Equality the prophetic principle—The nobility in post-exilic times—The non-realization of the prophetic ideals—Aristocracy and Democracy—Religion the most effective force in human affairs—The prophetic testimony to the general oppression of the poor—The intemperate habits and the debauchery of the wealthy classes—Their defense of the state—Foreign mercenaries—The overthrow of aristocratic states by Assyria—The carrying of the leading classes into captivity by Sargon—The Israelites invited by Hezekiah to participate in the celebration of Passover—The precarious condition of Judah in case of foreign aggression—The social condition of Athens in the 7th century—Solon's social reforms—A great religious lesson in history—The principles of justice and righteousness easy of realization—Zedekiah's covenant with the people—The breaking of this covenant—An unprecedented crime—The submission of the common people to the nobility—The nobility left behind in Judah after the First Captivity—Ezekiel's testimony—The impression of the First Captivity on the common people—The idolatrous practices of the Judeans in Egypt—Their answer to Jeremiah—The breaking of the covenant by the idolatrous nobility—Their cruelty toward their own peers in captivity—The territorial conception of Jahveh's power—The condition of the captives in Babylonia—The Universalistic principle of Ezekiel—The celestial and terrestrial kingdoms compared—The modern misconception of the prophetic Universalistic principle—The hypocrisy of the nobility.

PAGE 157

CHAPTER V

The prosperity of Israel and Judah—The accession of Tiglathpileser IV—The Western confederacy against Assyria—Judah not a member of this confederacy—Menahem's submission to Assyria—The condition of Israel—The rebellion against Menahem—The geographical position of Tiphshah—The people's approval of Zechariah's murder—Menahem's cruel treatment of the rebels—The reason for Menahem's joining the confederacy—The confirmation of his kingdom by Assyria—The consequence of his defection—The years of his reign—The murder of Pekahiah—The feud

between the two Joseph-tribes Ephraim and Manasseh—Pekah's precarious condition as the murderer of Pekahiah—His alliance with Rezin king of Aram—Their intention to revive the Western confederacy—Judah's refusal to join them—The social conditions of Israel compared with those of Judah—The effect of dynastic changes—The military system of Assyria—The change of dynasties in North-Israel—The long duration of the Jehu-dynasty—The denunciation of the nobility by Amos—Israel being in more need of his activity than Judah—Hosea's views of Judah—Menahem's new nobility—The permanency of Judah's nobility—Judah's caste-system—*The Am-Haareş*—The aliens in Judah—Their religion—Their treatment—Their influence—The mercenaries in Judah—The Carians—Their assistance at the overthrow of Athaliah—Arabian mercenaries—Hezekiah's "pious warriors"—The Rechabites—The foreign priests—The etymology of *Kōmer*—The term Chaldean—The Philistine oracles—The belief in foreign soothsayers an economic problem—The engagement of foreign diviners—The separate functions of the *Kohanim* and *Kemarim*—An illustration of their positions.

PAGE 196

CHAPTER VI

The position of the Levitical priesthood—The Levitical towns—The acquisition of property by Levites—The tribal distinctions under the monarchy—Priestly descent a curse—The Levites condemned to a life of penury—The curse pronounced against Simeon and Levi—The idea of this curse—The priestly position of the Levites in Egypt—Levi's blessing by Moses—Simeon and Levi individuals—Levi deeply impressed by his father's curse—The story of Micah—Levi's consecration as priest in Jacob's tribal sanctuary—The succession of his children as priests—The fate of Simeon—The conquest of Jerusalem—This city apportioned to the tribe of Simeon—The reconquest of this city by the Jebusites—The nigh annihilation of the tribe of Simeon—The refuge of the remnants of this tribe among the Judeans—Judah separated from the other tribes by a Canaanitic belt—The emigrations of the Simeonites—The high-priestly office in the temple of Shiloh—The two priestly clans Eleazar and Ithamar—The high priest Eli—The priestly towns of the Aaronides—The high priest Abiathar—The priestly town Anathoth in Benjamin—The seat of the chief sanctuary—The home of the high priests Eleazar and Phinehas—Gibeath-Phinehas—The separation of Judah from the other tribes—The reversion of the high-priestly office to the younger line—The genealogy of the high priests—The Judean chief sanctuary Hebron—The high priest Zadok—The chief sanctuary of Gibeon—The poverty of the Levites—The wealth of the priesthoods in all other countries—The acquisition of landed property by the sanctuary—The treasures of the temple of Jerusalem as national property—The income of the priests—The rise and fall of their fortunes—Their pride on their priestly rank and descent—Their material

condition during a period of apostasy—Israel under the influence of the Canaanitic civilization—The Lawgiver's provision for such an emergency—His experiences in the wilderness—The survival of Israel's religion in Canaan—The priestly struggle for existence—The spiritual superiority no cause for envy—The reconfirmation of the ancient position of the Levites—Israel a "kingdom of priests"—The priestly rank of the first-born—The Levites responding to the call of Moses—The chronological order of the priestly ordinances—The priestly rank cause of envy—Korah's revolt—The chiefs of the clans claiming the priestly prerogative—The priestly ordinances prevention of envy—The immigration of the Levites into Judah—Levi's blessing by Moses—Its reference to their substance and warlike qualities—Judah's blessing by Moses—The sympathy of the Levites with the poorer classes—The governing classes of Judah.

PAGE 230

CHAPTER VII

Isaiah's family—His induction into the prophetic office—The other prophets—The interpretation of Isaiah's message—Isaiah as champion of righteousness, an aristocrat—His belief in the divine right of the Davidic dynasty—His doctrine of a Remnant—"The stump of Jesse"—Deeds judged by environments—Isaiah's protest against the high position of Shebna—The cuneiform Shaphel-formation of the name *Shebna*—The first position of Shebna as a royal scribe—His enmity toward Assyria—His negotiation with Merodach-baladan—The approval of Shebna's policy by the anti-Assyrian party—Isaiah's opposition to foreign entanglements—His rise as champion of the hereditary privileges of the nobility—Shebna's successor as royal steward Eliakim—The aggravation of corruption and injustice under Shebna's stewardship—Micah's accusation of the ruling classes—The removal of Shebna as royal steward—A parallel between the Judean Isaiah and the Athenian Solon—Democracy and Autocracy—A Dictator—The autocratic Messiah—Isaiah's belief in Hezekiah as king of righteousness—The oracle against the Philistines—Biblical chronology—The date of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah—The date of Hezekiah's illness—The land of Immanuel—Isaiah as tutor of Hezekiah—The military force of this king—His religious conduct—His character—Isaiah's disappointment—His belief in the destiny of the house of David still strong—Micah's expectation of a righteous ruler—Hezekiah's alliance with Egypt—The conquest of Egypt the chief aim of Assyria—Egypt's claim to the Syrian dominions—The policy of the Egyptian kings—The safety of Egypt—The leading classes in the Western states bribed by Egypt—Hezekiah subsidized by Egypt—His embassy to Egypt—His disloyal nobility—The Ethiopian 25th Dynasty—Hezekiah's intention of entering into an alliance with Egypt during Sargon's reign—Isaiah's oracle against Egypt—Egypt's intrigues with Hezekiah after Sargon's death—Shebna's negotiations with Merodach-baladan—The latter's embassy to Hezekiah—Its purpose—Heze-

kiah's boast of his resources—The danger of this boast—Hezekiah concluding alliances without consulting the prophet—The prophet ridiculed—Hezekiah's implicit trust in the Lord—The corruption of the nobility known to this king—An autocratic state judged by the conduct of the king—This conception generally held—Judah's condition after Sennacherib's retreat—Hezekiah's trust in the Lord in vain—The religious condition aggravated by this conception—The second illness of Hezekiah—Hezekiah's tribute to Sennacherib—Isaiah's description of this period—The belief in the God of Israel undermined—The religious conditions under the reign of Manasseh—His hatred toward the Lord and His votaries—An historical parallel—Josiah's zeal in his reforms—His restoration of the United Kingdom—The establishing of his reforms in Samaria—The refusal of the Ephraimitic priests to submit to the Mosaic Law—The return of Ephraimites to the Mosaic religion before Josiah's reform—The two periods of Jeremiah's activity—His activity among the Ephraimites—His collision with the Ephraimitic priesthood—His appeal to Josiah—His activity under the rule of this king—His return to Judah after the death of Josiah—His activity among the Ephraimites not in vain—Religious ideas disseminated by force—Josiah's covenant imposed upon the ruling classes—The seed sown by Manasseh—The fate of the most righteous king—The re-appearance of idolatry and corruption—The people's conception of religion—The battle of Megiddo—Josiah's military exploit—His perfect trust upon the Lord—His ignorance of the real conditions—His challenge—The power of the Lord tested—The real event of Megiddo—Josiah murdered—A pro-Egyptian version of this event—The religious conduct of Josiah's successors—Josiah an idealistic dreamer—The discovery of the Mosaic Code questioned—Jehoiakim's policy with regard to the Jahveh-worship—The reign of Jehoiachin—The non-recognition of Zedekiah as legitimate king.

PAGE 259

CHAPTER VIII

The Western confederacy—Judah's refusal to join it—Its reason known to the allies—Their intention of overthrowing the Davidic dynasty—Its results—The realization of the prophetic teachings—The danger to the religion of Israel—Isaiah aligning himself with the Davidic dynasty—The position of the Levitical priests—The joy of the common people—The former slogan of the rebels—The depredations of the allies in Judah—The softly flowing waters of Shiloah—The new social order—Its ephemeral character—The arrival of the Assyrian army—The son of Tabeel—Tiglathpileser's campaign in Armenia—His aid invoked by Ahaz—The unbelief of Ahaz in Isaiah's divine message—His fears—Tiglathpileser received as benefactor—Isaiah's description of his speedy arrival—The outcome of Isaiah's advice if heeded by Ahaz—The impression from the narrative of the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion—The version of the Book of

Chronicles—Its historical sources—The battle of Pekah against the Judean army—The siege and conquest of Elath by Rezin—Pekah's first siege of Jerusalem—The second siege by the united forces of Aram and Israel—The last six chapters of the Book of Zechariah—The overwhelming evidence for their pre-exilic origin—Their reference to the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion of Judah—Judah an unwilling ally—The views of the pre-exilic prophet—His reference to the unsuccessful siege of Jerusalem—The retreat of the allies—The confusion in their armies—The Judeans recognizing the hand of the Lord—The attack of the Judeans on the retreating allies—The peace between the Judeans and the Davidic dynasty—The sally of the besieged—The execution of the royal prince, royal steward, and grand vizier by the rebels—The general public mourning for the royal prince—"The cutting off of three shepherds in one month"—Prophetic interpretations of historical reminiscences—The pre-exilic prophet Zechariah son of Jeberechiah—The faithful witness—Chapter 14—Two prophecies mixed up—"The two tails of smoking firebrands"—Rezin and Pekah heads of the ruling classes and not of their nations—Ahaz declining the prophet's offer of a sign—Its reason—The prophet's answer—The former devotion of the Judeans to the house of David—Their patience exhausted—The prediction of Immanuel's birth—The fulfillment of the prophecies—The captivity of the East-Jordan and Galilean tribes—The negotiations of Ahaz with Assyria unknown to Isaiah—"The separation of Ephraim from Judah"—The separation of the Judeans from Jerusalem—A comparison of chapter 7 with chapter 8—The ambiguous legend *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*—The faithful witnesses—The legend written in Hebrew and Aramaic—The tablet to be exposed—The naming of the prophet's son—The overthrow of Damascus and Samaria—The punishment of the Judeans in the near future—The waters of Shiloah compared with the many and mighty waters of the Euphrates—The pro-Assyrian and the pro-Allies parties—Isaiah denounced by both parties—The sanctification of the Lord's name—Isaiah discredited in the eyes of the people—The prophet's hope—The living words of the Lord—The binding up of the attestation and sealing of the oracle—The current belief in necromancy—Its practice prohibited—A true oracle—The prophet being challenged—His activity in vain.

FOREWORD

THE work, *The Priests and Prophets*, here presented, is a posthumous work of Jacob Hoschander. He was a gifted and industrious student and writer, but a man of great humility, and he rarely considered his own writings up to the point of presentation to the scholarly world.

From among literally thousands of pages of manuscript which he left behind him this work has been chosen to be published, with the aid of some of his friends, because it not only shows his method of research but presents some very important aspects of biblical history, and particularly of the relations of the Priests and the Prophets in a new light, and his conclusions are deserving of the attention of biblical scholars.

The manuscript was without any notes and it seemed, after consideration, that it would not be wise to invite anyone to supply these notes more especially as Doctor Hoschander's method was in the main not to burden his writings with foot-notes but rather to incorporate references in the text itself.

Since he was a modest man and was very little known to the public it seems appropriate that there should be here some slight biographical statement so that, along with this work, the reader may have at least a few words about the man himself.

Jacob Hoschander was born in Teschen, Silesia (Austria), in 1874, the son of Moses and Anna Wertheim Hoschander. He studied at various rabbinical academies in Hungary and had acquired a good preparation for entrance to the University. In 1901 he went to Germany, where he entered the University of Berlin, and in 1904 received his Doctor's degree at the University of Marburg for an Assyriological thesis. The next year he proceeded to England and continued his studies in Semitics and particularly in Cuneiform Inscriptions at the British Museum. In 1909 he came to America and was appointed first a research fellow at the newly formed Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, and later a lecturer in Semitic languages. He covered the full field, as he knew not only biblical and rabbinical writings well but also Assyrian, Ethiopic, Arabic and Syriac. He taught all these languages at the Dropsie College until 1913, when a young student from London, Benzion Halper, was admitted as a student. Halper was a graduate of the University of London, later enjoyed a travelling fellowship in Egypt and acquired an excellent knowledge of Arabic. After Halper had been a student for a very short time Dr. Hoschander pointed out to the Faculty that his student had a better knowledge of Arabic than he had and requested that he should be relieved of the teaching of Arabic and that it should be given over to Halper. This was a very characteristic act of fairness and of humility on his part.

He was mostly devoted to Cuneiform Inscriptions and he continued his teaching at Dropsie College from

1909 to 1923, devoting himself largely to Assyriology and inspiring many students and instructing one at least who has become a very brilliant scholar in this field.

But even while he was doing this his mind was constantly reverting to biblical studies and the Dropsie College published for him a work entitled *The Book of Esther in the Light of History*, holding the view that Esther was an historical document and not a romance as was then being commonly asserted. This foreshadows in its originality and brilliance the volume which is now being presented.

After the lamented death of Prof. Israel Friedlaender in 1920, who was Sabato Morais Professor of Biblical Literature at the Jewish Theological Seminary, Dr. Hoschander gave a series of lectures at the Seminary and in 1923 was elected to the Professorship there. He continued his teaching and his scientific labors over a period of ten years and was beloved of the Faculties of both the Dropsie College and the Seminary and of all the students who ever came in contact with him.

Dr. Hoschander was a staunch traditionalist in his private life and in his biblical work he felt it almost a sacred duty to engage in polemics against the modern biblical criticism, and this he did in many articles and reviews published in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*. But this traditionalism did not at all prevent him from having an open mind or giving credence to any new discovery in his fields. He had a fine knowledge of the whole history of the ancient East, and, although he never engaged directly in archaeological research him-

self, he brought the fruits of archaeological research with discrimination to the students of the Bible.

He was a good teacher, a man of inexpressible charm and gentleness and of real piety and saintliness. He was a beautiful soul.

His memory is for a blessing.

CYRUS ADLER

THE
PRIESTS AND PROPHETS



CHAPTER I

The priestly class *Kemārīm*—The abolition of their priestly office—Solomon's foreign sanctuaries—Their purpose—The foreign priests of these sanctuaries—The ancestral religion of the Canaanites under Solomon's reign—Their status as aliens—Their treatment—Their support of Jeroboam—The Aryan Hittites—Their religious influence—The Hittite "bull-god"—The Baalim-worship—Jeroboam's syncretistic Jahveh-worship—The religious attitude of the Israelites—Jeroboam's Canaanitic military force—His election—The loyal adherents of the Davidic dynasty in North-Israel—The recognition of the Canaanites as equal citizens—Their anomalous position among the Israelites—The amalgamation of the Canaanitic and Israelitish creeds—Jeroboam's own religious conception—The identification of Jahveh with Baal—The Baalim representatives and emanations of the ancient supreme god of Palestine—Historical parallels in Israel's history—The priests of Jeroboam's sanctuaries—The priestly rank of kings and chiefs—The position of the Levitical priests—Jeroboam's priestly schools—The Festival of Jahveh as God of agriculture in the 8th month—The position of the Vernal Equinox in Taurus—The *Asheroth* and *Asherim*—No *Asherah* in Jeroboam's sanctuaries—His innovations of a ritual character—The veneration of his memory by the pious Jehu-dynasty—The attitude of the prophets toward his innovation—The origin of the Mosaic rituals—The three religious stages—The Mosaic Monotheism—State Monotheism and National Monotheism—The identification of the Baalim with the Host of heaven—The Heavenly Court in the visions of the prophets—Jeremiah's monotheistic conception—Deutero-Isaiah's rigid Monotheism—The belief in angels and Monotheism—Zechariah's and Daniel's conception of angels—The definition of angels by Maimonides.

AMONG the priests of Israel we meet with a sacerdotal class called *Kemārīm*. This priestly term is generally rendered "idolatrous priests." But considering that the common priestly designation *Kōhanim* is applied also to heathen priests, as to those of Egypt (Gen. 41.45, 50; 47.22, 26), to the Philistine priests (I Sam. 5.5), and even to the priests of Baal (II Kings 10.19; 11.18), there does not seem to be any reason why a special term *Kemārīm* should have been coined to designate the idolatrous priesthood of

Israel. Moreover, in the biblical record describing Josiah's re-establishment of the Mosaic religion, it is stated: והשבית את הכמרים אשר נתנו מלכי יהודה ויקטר בבמות בערי יהודה ומסבי ירושלים "And he put down the *Kemārīm*, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to offer in the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places round about Jerusalem" (II Kings 23.5). Shall we indeed credit the biblical historian with such a sweeping statement that the kings of Judah did ordain idolatrous priests? If the author referred exclusively to Manasseh and Amon, he ought to have stated it clearly. Now we might say that its reference to any of Hezekiah's predecessors would be out of consideration, as this king abolished the Jahvistic high places and surely would not have permitted the continuation of idolatrous institutions. However, this is not so obvious as it might seem. The very fact that Josiah abolished Solomon's idolatrous sanctuaries (II Kings 23.13) proves clearly that Hezekiah did not object to their continuation. Even if we should concede that it refers to Manasseh and Amon, the question further arises: Why did these kings ordain a special class of priests called *Kemārīm* and were not satisfied with the priestly service of the *Kōhanim*, if they were willing to officiate at the idolatrous services of the local sanctuaries? It is scarcely conceivable that under the reign of the cruel king Manasseh "who filled Jerusalem with innocent blood from one end to the other" (ibid. 21.16; 24.4; Jer. 15.4), the *Kōhanim* should have endangered their lives by refusing to officiate at the idolatrous sanctuaries.

Furthermore, the expression והשבית את הכמרים, which literally means: "and he caused the *Kemārīm* to cease," obviously indicates that Josiah put an end to their priestly activity, without inflicting upon them the penalty of death as idolators. But bearing in mind the severity with which this king treated the priests of Beth-el and of other Ephraimitic sanctuaries whom he slaughtered upon the altars (II Kings 23.20), the lenient treatment of the idolatrous priesthood

of Judah by this king would seem rather strange. Or shall we say that Josiah regarded the priests of Samaria as having been more guilty than those of Judah, seeing that the idolatrous practices of the North-Israelitish priests were of a voluntary nature, while those of Judah were the effect of duress and tyrannical force of the idolatrous king Manasseh? But on the other hand, it must be borne in mind that the North-Israelitish priests were no innovators of their worship, as they merely followed the time-honored custom of their ancestors. If, however, Josiah did not take this fact into consideration, but in his zeal for the re-establishment of the Mosaic religion relentlessly slaughtered the Ephraimitic priests, is it likely that he would have been more lenient toward idolatrous priests of Judah in leaving them unharmed, and only abolished their priestly activity?

To be sure, the expression "to cause to cease" may also be understood in the sense of "exterminating." But if the author meant to say that Josiah exterminated the *Kemārīm*, he surely would have used a less ambiguous term, as השמר, הרג, המית, and not השבית. The Septuagint may have felt this difficulty, and therefore renders והשבית את הכמרים with καὶ κατέκαυσεν τοὺς χωμαρεῖμ "And he burned the *Kemārīm*." It likewise renders: והשבית את הסוסים with καὶ κατέκαυσεν τοὺς ἵππους "And he burned the horses" (ibid. 23.11). But the term κατέκαυσεν may well be a scribal error for κατεπαυσεν "And he caused to cease." That κατέκαυσεν could not have been the original reading is seen from the fact that the term שרף which occurs several times in this narrative is likewise rendered with κατέκαυσεν (ibid. 23.4, 6, 11, 15, 16, 20), and it is certainly unlikely that LXX should have used the same rendering for two different terms occurring side by side. Thus the *Kemārīm* were not executed by Josiah, notwithstanding his zeal for the re-establishment of the Mosaic religion. However, in the same passage the *Kemārīm* are mentioned together with "those that offered unto Baal, to the sun, and to the

moon, and to the constellations, and to all the host of heaven" (ibid. 23.5). The latter were idolators in the very sense of the term. From their differentiation we may gather that the *Kemārîm* were priests of a different kind. Now if the latter were not executed, the same must be true of those idolators. But if Josiah did not inflict the punishment of death on the Judean idolators, his treatment of the priests of Samaria would be without any justification. As a matter of fact, the current conception, that Josiah killed the Ephraimitic priesthood on account of their idolatrous practices, is altogether wrong. They were killed on account of their opposition to Josiah's reforms. If the Judean idolators had acted in the same way, they would have suffered the same fate. But the latter were ready to give up their practices, and the Ephraimitic priests were not.

The First Book of Kings narrates: "Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh, the detestation of Moab, in the mount that is before Jerusalem, and for Moloch, the detestation of the children of Amon. And so did he for all his foreign wives, who offered and sacrificed unto their gods" (11.7-8). The statement that Solomon built these sanctuaries for the convenience of his foreign wives may be partly correct. We may well assume that the royal princesses married to Solomon were accompanied by retinues of their own countries, as it was always customary, and it stands to reason that these foreigners did not feel quite at home in Jerusalem, if they could not worship their ancestral deities in this foreign city. However, considering Solomon's commercial enterprises and ambitions, it seems more probable that the real reason underlying the erection of these sanctuaries was a part of his policy to make Jerusalem a cosmopolitan city in order to attract foreign merchants. They surely would have avoided entering the country, if the government in accordance with the biblical religious conceptions should have prevented them from worshipping their own native deities in their own fashion.

But Solomon showed himself even more tolerant toward the foreigners than rulers of other countries, in placing at their disposal sanctuaries dedicated to their own gods, where they could freely worship them as in their own countries. It goes without saying that the worship in these sanctuaries would not have been complete without a priesthood fully conversant with the rituals of each of these deities worshipped there. Even among the heathen natives, the rituals, formulae, and incantations were not a matter of common knowledge. How much less could one expect to find men possessing such a knowledge among the people of Israel. If Solomon wanted the foreigners to worship their own deities in the sanctuaries dedicated to them, he had to go a step farther, in importing priests of these deities to officiate in these sanctuaries. These imported heathen priests were appointees of the Israelitish government who received an adequate salary for their services.

The Book of Kings accuses Solomon of idolatry: "For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonites, and after Milkom the detestation of the Ammonites" (I Kings 11.5). But this statement is scarcely reconcilable with that of the preceding passage which says: "and his heart was not whole with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father." The latter would be an exceedingly mild accusation, if Solomon had become an idolator in the very sense of the term. But in antiquity, a king was *ex-officio* the high-priest of all the sanctuaries in the country. The same custom was followed by Solomon, the more so, since these sanctuaries were royal establishments, erected and kept up by the government. Solomon in his own mind considered himself to be a faithful devotee of the God of Israel, notwithstanding the fact that he paid honors to the gods of the foreigners whom he regarded as minor deities, subject to the national God of the country, in accordance with ancient conceptions. It is likely that he personally dedicated these foreign sanctuaries and in-

ducted the imported priests into their office. He was not a *Monotheist*, in the sense of disregarding the existence of all other gods, as was his father; he was a *Henotheist*, and therefore: "his heart was not whole with the Lord his God."

There is no biblical record to the effect that these foreign sanctuaries erected by Solomon had been abolished by any of his pious successors, as Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, Jotham or Hezekiah. There is no reference to the existence of these sanctuaries until we come to Josiah's reign, to the period of his restoration of the Mosaic religion. There it is stated: "And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth, the detestation of the Zidonites, and for Chemosh the detestation of Moab, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile. And he broke in pieces the pillars, and cut down the Asherim, and filled their places with the bones of men" (II Kings 23.13-14). It would thus seem that for a period of about 320 years (940-621 B.C.E.), these sanctuaries continued their existence in Judah, and none of the pious kings thought of interfering with their idolatrous activity. The policy of Solomon to provide places of worship for the foreign merchants was fully approved and continued by his successors. The priests of these sanctuaries were still kept up at the expense of the government. It may be that also in later periods it was necessary to import priests from abroad to officiate in these sanctuaries. But it is also possible that the office of these priests was inherited by the descendants of the priests imported under the reign of Solomon. Be that as it may, these priests, not having been of the seed of Israel, had no obligation to worship the God of Israel, and could not be blamed for their idolatrous activities. It is even very likely that they also, like Solomon, fully recognized Jahveh as the Supreme God of

the country. Their priestly offices could be abolished, their sanctuaries could be destroyed, the priests themselves could be expelled from the country. But there was no reason for condemning them to death on account of their idolatrous activities, as long as they were restricted to the foreigners, and did not lure the Judeans to their worship. We may certainly credit them with so much common sense, that they strictly attended to their own business, in officiating for their own people, and left the Judeans severely alone. Any propaganda of converting the Judeans to their own creed would have excited against them the envy and jealousy of the Jahvistic priesthoods both of the Central Sanctuary and of the local sanctuaries, and even their own existence would have been precarious, especially under the reign of pious kings. Even such an idolatrous king as Manasseh does not seem to have worshipped in any of these sanctuaries. Therefore Josiah, howsoever zealous he may have been in the extermination of idolatry, could not have closed his eyes to the dictates of justice, a king of whom Jeremiah said that "he did justice and righteousness" (Jer. 22.15). Thus he could not have condemned these idolatrous priests to death, but merely abolished their priestly offices. We see, then, that the biblical historian expressed himself with precision in saying: והשבית את הכמרים אשר נתנו מלכי יהודה "And he put down the *Kemārīm* which the kings of Judah had ordained." True the statement יהודה בערי יהודה "to offer in the high places in the cities of Judah" might seem disturbing to our interpretation, considering that the idolatrous sanctuaries erected by Solomon were situated in the vicinity of Jerusalem, as it is indeed stated: ומסבי ירושלים "and in the places round about Jerusalem." However, that which Solomon did in Jerusalem, some of his successors may have done in other localities of Judah, in providing places of worship for foreigners in the marts of commerce.

Seeing that foreigners were permitted to worship their

own deities within the confines of the Israelitish state, the question arises whether the non-Israelitish native population of Canaan was likewise permitted to continue its ancestral worship or was forced by the government to discontinue its idolatrous practices and to accept the exclusive worship of the God of Israel. There seems to be good reason for answering this question in the affirmative. The Book of Kings tells us: "And all the people that were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivvites, and the Jebusites, who were not of the children of Israel; even their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel were not able utterly to destroy, of them did Solomon raise a levy of bondservants, unto this day" (I Kings 9.20-21). I Chronicles 22.2 indicates that David had already reduced the non-Israelitish native population to bondservants, in stating: "And David commanded to gather together the strangers that were in the land of Israel; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God." II Chronicles 2.16-17 leaves no room for doubt that these "strangers" (*Gērīm*) were the non-Israelitish population of Canaan: "And Solomon numbered all the *strangers* that were in the land of Israel, after the numbering wherewith David his father had numbered them; and they were found a hundred and fifty thousand, and three thousand and six hundred. And he set seventy thousand of them to bear burdens, and eighty thousand to be hewers in the mountains, and three thousand and six hundred overseers to set the people at work" (compare also II Chronicles 8.7-8 with I Kings 9.20-21). Now we may readily assume that in David's census (II Samuel 24) the non-Israelitish population were numbered separately, or that it was conducted in a way as to distinguish between Israelites and non-Israelites, though the numbers given there probably included the whole population without distinction of race. But David was too great a statesman to credit him with the disastrous idea of reduc-

ing a considerable part of the population of Canaan to the position of bondservants and thereby sowing the seed of discord and hatred among a newly united people. However, considering that as mechanics the Canaanites were far superior to the Israelites, David may have hired Canaanitic masons to prepare stones for the building of the Temple. This of course involved heavy expenses. In order to get rid of this burden and to obtain cheap labor, Solomon proclaimed the Canaanitic natives as "strangers," who had to pay with compulsory labor for permission to live in the country. The Canaanites were treated by him just as Israel's ancestors were formerly treated in Egypt. This was a clever scheme and economically highly successful. Nevertheless, it was an exceedingly short-sighted policy. Solomon antagonized thereby a large and influential part of the population. It was an act of ingratitude on the part of the Israelitish government to disfranchise an element of the population that had so largely contributed to the unification of the Tribes of Israel and to their establishment of a powerful state. It is very questionable whether the Israelites would have been able to free themselves from the yoke of the Philistines and to effect their union, if the Canaanites had made common cause with their Philistine oppressors. We may well imagine how bitterly they must have detested the Davidic dynasty. Nor is there any reason for the assumption that the Israelites at large approved of this measure of disfranchising the Canaanitic population. For centuries they had lived side by side without any friction. With the exception of descent, there was scarcely any difference between the Israelites and the Canaanites. Surely there was not the least justification for depriving the Canaanites of the rights of citizens. In this act of Solomon we may find one of the chief contributing causes of the Division of the Israelitish Monarchy. It is natural that these disfranchised Canaanites should have sided with any usurper against the Davidic dynasty, if he should have

promised them the restitution of their citizenship. The overwhelming majority of the Canaanites lived of course in the territory of the Ten Tribes, while in Judah they constituted a small minority. Their only representatives seem to have been the Jebusites in Jerusalem. In the oppressed Canaanitic population, hostile to the House of David, Jeroboam found a ready army to fight for his claim to the throne over North Israel.

If the Canaanites constituted the military force in Jeroboam's rebellion against the Davidic dynasty, this fact would shed considerable light on this king's innovations in the establishment of his religious institutions in North Israel. It is a well known fact that a considerable part of the Canaanitic population belonged to the Hittites, who are held to have been of Aryan origin. Eduard Meyer, in his treatment of the peoples of Palestine, observes as follows: "Among those peoples we find also Aryan elements. This fact is fully confirmed by numerous names of native princes, in the Amarna Letters, which are distinctly Aryan, as *Shuwardata*, *Yashdata*, *Artamanya*, *Arzawaya*, and others; further in all probability, *Biridiya* or *Biridashya*, *Namayawaza*, *Teuwatti*, *Shubandi*, *Shutarna*, and some others. They occur especially frequently as names of Palestinian princes. We thus see that the whole of Syria reaching to the borders of the Arabian desert was overflowed by Aryan hordes, whose chieftains made themselves masters of many cities, and founded there dynasties, in a similar way as did under Islam the Turks and the Kurds" (*Geschichte des Altertums*, I², p. 468). This historian aptly compares the invasion of Syria and Palestine by the Hittite-Aryan hordes to that of the Turks and Kurds under Islam. The latter first entered into the services of the Caliphs. But as their power increased, they made themselves independent, and their allegiance to the Caliphate became merely nominal. In the same way, the Hittite-Aryan chieftains entered Syria and Palestine as adventur-

ers where they were received into the services of the native princes as warriors and bodyguards. But as soon as they felt themselves strong enough, they overthrew their masters and made themselves independent princes.

The very fact that so many Palestinian princes were of Hittite origin leaves no room for doubt concerning the important part they played in these territories in the pre-Israelitish periods. If the Hittites were of such political importance there, we may rest assured that they likewise profoundly influenced the religious conceptions of the Palestinian population, which were of a syncretistic character. For instance, the practice of human sacrifices found among the pre-Israelite Palestinian peoples is very probably due to Hittite influence. Old Testament passages (Deuteronomy 12.31, 18.10; Leviticus 18.21) leave no room for doubt concerning this practice in the religion of the predecessors of Israel. Now as far as the Egyptians are concerned, the existence of the rite of human sacrifices among them in an early period is based on the testimony of certain classical writers, and has not yet found corroboration from native documents (cf. Ed. Meyer's *Gesch. d. Alten Aegypt.*, p. 42). Herodotus II, 45 denies the existence of this rite in the Egyptian religion. This testimony is confirmed by the very fact that there is no reference to such a custom in the Egyptian documents. Nor are there certain traces of human sacrifice in the cuneiform documents. Thus this custom found among the Palestinian population is due neither to Egyptian nor Babylonian influences. On the other hand, the prevalence of the custom of human sacrifice is fully and incontrovertibly attested among all the Indo-European peoples, and the Aryan-Hittites were surely no exception. If we now find such a custom in Canaan in a period when the Hittites constituted the ruling race in the country, we are fully justified in ascribing it to Hittite influence.

Be that as it may, there is another point of more interest

for the subject under consideration, which shows the religious influence of the Hittites in Canaan. It has been pointed out that the "bull-god" was one of the chief Hittite deities in whose honor images of bulls were dedicated. The Hittite influence was especially strong in Northern Syria. There where the storm-god, Adad-Raman, was especially worshipped, the bull was his sacred symbol, as he is often depicted standing on the back of a bull. But we know that the god Adad was identical with the Canaanitic supreme deity *Ba'al*. The latter being primarily god of agriculture, it is natural that the bull that draws the plough should be sacred to this god and should become his symbol. But all the Canaanitic local Baalim were likewise agricultural deities, and we may readily assume that in all Canaanitic sanctuaries dedicated to the Baalim, the bull was venerated as their symbol. Seeing that the Hittites worshipped a "bull-god," it is very likely that all the local Baalim were worshipped in the images of bulls.

Jeroboam set up in the sanctuaries of Beth-el and Dan images of a bull as representatives of Jahveh. It has been thought that this form of worship was derived from Egypt where Jeroboam sojourned for a long period, after he had unsuccessfully rebelled against Solomon. But it has been urged against this explanation, that the Egyptians worshipped the living animal and not the image of it. True, there are votive images of Apis, and also the Egyptians may have worshipped him in an image. But Apis was a special animal with certain marks, and the birth of such an animal was celebrated among the Egyptians with festivities and great rejoicings. People that lived far away from Memphis had to be satisfied with the worship of the image of Apis. But a living bull could be obtained anywhere in the country, and there was no need to worship him in an image. Moreover, it is unlikely that Jeroboam would have dared to introduce such an innovation imported from Egypt, as he might have estranged from him

many of the Israelites, if this kind of worship would not have been well known to them. The Israelitish people at large knew nothing about the worship of Egypt, and would have been horrified to see the God of Israel represented by the image of a bull. But it is quite different if the Israelites had seen this kind of worship among the Canaanites in all the local sanctuaries dedicated to the Baalim. They knew that, in former days, the Israelites themselves worshipped the Baalim in the images of bulls. Thus the introduction of the Bull-worship was not an innovation but a restoration of the former mode of worship. There was only one difference between the past and present practices. Formerly the image of a bull was the representation of Baal or the Baalim, while now it became the representation of Jahveh. This mode of worship was a syncretism: the Canaanitic form of worship in the service of Jahveh.

As far as the Israelites themselves were concerned, there was not the least reason for Jeroboam to introduce this innovation. He could have erected sanctuaries in all the places hallowed by traditions, Beth-el, Shechem, and other localities, as rivals of the Temple of Jerusalem. He could even have restored the ancient sanctuary of Shiloh, which certainly would have been held in higher veneration than the Judean sanctuary. Such sanctuaries could have been established strictly in the spirit of the ancient Israelitish religious conceptions, without any representation of Jahveh. There was not the least ground to fear that the Northern Israelites would prefer the Judean temples to their own sanctuaries. Even when united under the Davidic dynasty, there was never any love lost between Judah and the Northern Tribes. As a matter of fact, the latter must have bitterly resented the erection of the Central Sanctuary of Israel in a city recently conquered from the Jebusites, which was still inhabited by them, and not in one of the localities which Israel's ancestors had sanctified by their presence, as Beer-sheba, Beth-el, Gilgal, Heb-

ron or Shechem. Moreover the Judean chief sanctuary recalled bitter memories of the burden they bore under its builder, as it was erected by means of oppression and heavy taxation of the people. Its expenses and those of other splendid edifices which Solomon erected were not defrayed from the profits he gained from his commercial enterprises. Otherwise the people could not have complained to Rehoboam: "Thy father made our yoke grievous" (I Kings 12.4). All these facts must have been known to Jeroboam, and he could not have feared "that the people will go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem" (I Kings 12.27). Thus there must have been a political reason for the introduction of the worship of the bulls into Israel by Jeroboam.

We have seen that the Canaanites deprived of their rights of citizenship by Solomon and reduced to the status of bondservants had become the main supporters of Jeroboam. They were willing to take up his cause and to assert his claim to the throne over Northern Israel by force. Jeroboam of course saw clearly the advantage of having at his disposal a warlike army which might force any part of Israel that would be unwilling to recognize him as king of Israel. They constituted a formidable army. About the beginning of Solomon's reign they numbered 150,000 able-bodied men who had to perform the required compulsory labor. Though a part of them lived in the South, which could not be taken into consideration, in the case of a rebellion against the Davidic dynasty, we must bear in mind that this number must have considerably increased during the long reign of Solomon. It would be a fair estimate that this number was at least doubled during a period of more than forty years.

From the historical records we must gather that Jeroboam was unanimously elected king of Israel, without any dissenting vote and without friction. This is well possible but scarcely probable. True, Solomon by his short-sighted

policy antagonized all classes of the population. The common people suffered heavily under the burden of taxation, and were far from espousing the cause of his dynasty. The Canaanites must have detested his very name. In the eyes of the pious men of Israel he was nothing short of an idolator, in having erected sanctuaries to foreign deities in the land of Israel, as the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite declared (I Kings 11.33). Furthermore, the people as a whole must have bitterly resented his attempt to wipe out all tribal distinctions, in dividing the country into 12 provinces and appointing over them governors who should provide for the wants of his court (*ibid.* 4.7-19). It is noteworthy that among the 12 provinces that had to bear each month the enormous expenses of supplying provisions for the royal household (*ibid.* 5.2-3), the land of Judah is not mentioned, which practically means that the Judeans were free from these taxes. The other tribes were thus degraded to second-rate citizens, while the Judeans ranked as nobles. This treatment was bound to deepen and intensify the dislike of the other tribes toward Judah and David's dynasty.

Nevertheless, there must have been even among the Northern tribes a strong minority which was anxious to preserve the union of Israel under the reigning dynasty. There must have been men who were far-sighted enough to perceive that a division of the monarchy would endanger their independence, and they might fall an easy prey to the ambitions of one of the neighboring powers. The oppression under the Philistines must have been still alive in the memory of many Israelites. Furthermore, though the people at large had become impoverished by the burdens imposed upon them by Solomon's policy, there were no doubt a large number which had become wealthy by engaging in commerce and taking advantage of Solomon's mercantile enterprises. It would have been against their interest to separate themselves from the reigning dynasty.

There were also a large number of officials who enriched themselves in their positions, and they and their followers were quite satisfied with the existing conditions. Moreover, two of the governors placed over the provinces married daughters of Solomon (*ibid.* 4.11,15). These governors had good reason to be loyal to the royal house with which they were allied, and we may rest assured that they had a powerful following which under their protection acquired honors and riches. Finally, it must be borne in mind that the upper stratum of the Israelitish population, more refined and better educated than the people at large, were dazzled by the splendor of Solomon's reign, and were highly gratified to find that for the first time in Israel's history their country was generally feared and respected. Thus there were not a few among the Northern Israelites whose loyalty to the house of David may be taken as a matter of course.

Yet it seems that none of these factions lifted a finger in the defense of the Davidic dynasty and the preservation of the union of Israel. Jeroboam on his accession did not encounter any difficulty in being generally acknowledged as king of Israel. Nor was there any other ambitious leader who contested his claim and aspired to this high position. This is a matter of fact, and we have no reason to doubt the biblical historian's narrative of Jeroboam's elevation to the throne over Northern Israel. This historian was far from being favorably inclined toward this king whom he regarded as an idolator. If he had found in his historical sources that Jeroboam did encounter any opposition to his ambitions, he would have recorded this fact. None of the Northern Israelites dared to utter a dissenting word against Jeroboam, as he possessed at his beck and call a powerful army of the Canaanites, which would have speedily and effectively silenced any opposition. These Canaanites were well provided with arms by Jeroboam's agents, and in each tribal territory they were numerous enough to stifle any

opposition and to put down any rebellion against Jeroboam in its very inception. We must consider that the Canaanites were in a desperate condition. Having been disfranchised, they lost not only their citizenship but also their liberty. In becoming bondservants, they lost also their ancestral estates. Their property belonged to the government, and they lived on their former estates as serfs. In their present condition, their lives were of little value in their eyes, and they could easily expose themselves and face any danger in the cause of Jeroboam. They had nothing to lose, if defeated, and everything to gain, if victorious. Jeroboam could safely rely upon their allegiance. It was different with the Israelites. Though opposed to the Davidic dynasty, it is doubtful whether any tribe would have engaged in a fratricidal war, if a minority had arisen in its defense. The less would they have done so, if some other claimant to the throne would have raised the flag of rebellion against Jeroboam. We have no reason to suppose that the overbearing Ephraimites were especially popular with the other tribes of Israel. They submitted to the leadership of the Ephraimites out of hatred toward the Judeans and their royal house. In comparison with the latter, the Ephraimites were regarded as a minor evil.

It goes without saying that Jeroboam restored to the Canaanites not only their citizenship but also their ancestral estates, and they became in every respect equal members of the Israelitish state. But due to the circumstances, they became even more than that. As the valiant defenders and supporters of Jeroboam's throne they would naturally have become the warrior class in Israel. In such a position their influence ought to have been paramount. History shows, in innumerable cases, that whenever there arises a warrior class which becomes the main support of the throne, the king is merely a pawn in its hands, and a similar state of affairs would be expected in the case of Jeroboam, leaning upon the force of the Canaanitic warriors. How-

ever, it is unlikely that the Canaanitic warrior class misused its position. Its leaders were well aware of the fact that their people constituted merely a small part of the population of the country, and were careful not to antagonize the Israelites by overbearing conduct or by having some of their own people appointed to high positions. The Israelites who feared an invasion of the Judeans, as Rehoboam indeed contemplated (*ibid.* 12.21), were quite pleased to possess an army which for its own sake would fight to the last man against the invaders, and they could face the future with equanimity. Now according to the account of I Kings 12.21-24, it was the prophet Shemaiah who prevented Rehoboam's invasion of Israel, in calling on the Judeans and Benjamites to desist from a fratricidal war: "Thus saith the Lord: Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel; return every man to his house; for this thing is of Me." Considering, however, that neither Rehoboam nor the Judeans as a whole were faithful worshippers of Jahveh (*ibid.* 14.22-24), it would seem strange, that they should have willingly accepted the word of the prophet to abandon this campaign against Israel. It is more likely that in the meantime Rehoboam learned of the mighty army of the Canaanites that was at Jeroboam's disposal, that may have been superior to that of the Southern kingdom, and therefore readily complied with the word of the prophet not to engage in a war that might prove disastrous to him and the Judeans.

But Jeroboam was too shrewd a statesman not to conceive that in the long run such an anomalous position of the Canaanites among the Israelites might lead to complications which would endanger the existence of the state. As long as there loomed the danger of a Judean invasion, the Israelites would be quite willing that the Canaanites should stand the brunt of the encounter in meeting the enemy. But when the danger was past, the conditions would be different. Friction could not be avoided in a state

inhabited by heterogeneous elements. As a matter of fact, the danger of a Judean invasion never passed during the reign of Jeroboam, as the Book of Kings states: "And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life" (I Kings 15.6). The same condition continued under Abijah, Rehoboam's successor (ibid. 15.7). Another tradition even claims that Jeroboam suffered a severe defeat at the hands of Abijah (II Chronicles 13.17). Be that as it may, if the Canaanites constituted the warrior class of Israel, it was obviously due to them that Jeroboam was able to hold his own in these encounters. However, after Shishak's invasion of Judah in the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign (I Kings 14.25-28), the Judean king had scarcely the means of engaging in a war with Israel and must have kept quiet for several years. It is even questionable whether during Shishak's lifetime, Rehoboam dared to engage in a war at all. Thus the term "war" need not be taken literally, but in the meaning of "a state of war." We may thus assume that on the whole the Northern Israelites felt themselves comparatively secure from a Judean invasion. While, however, the Canaanites had not many chances of showing their prowess in the defense of the country, Jeroboam was in need of the force of the Canaanites for his own protection against the ambitions of Israelitish leaders. Surrounded by the Canaanitic bodyguards and their commanders he felt absolutely safe, as none of them had the least intention of aspiring to the throne of Israel. But there was good reason for the apprehension that in the course of time the position of the Canaanites would excite the envy and jealousy of the Israelites. Jeroboam's son and successor Nadab, having a legitimate claim to the throne, may indeed have parted with the Canaanitic bodyguards and surrounded himself with his own people, but he was murdered by one of his ambitious captains, Baasa the son of Ahijah, who succeeded him as king of Israel (ibid. 15.27-28). From the historical records we must gather that Baasa did not

encounter any difficulty in claiming the throne of Israel, and that he was readily acknowledged as king by the people. This demonstrates the indifference of the Israelites toward the person who occupied the throne, as long as he did not burden them with heavy taxation. Jeroboam was thus right in not putting his trust in the loyalty of his own people. However, as long as the population of Israel was not of a homogeneous character, the existence of the state was precarious.

There was only one way out of this dilemma: to change the Canaanites into Israelites. Now to a casual observer, there was not the least difference between Israelites and Canaanites with regard to features, speech, dress and manners. As far as the Canaanites of Semitic origin were concerned, the Israelites belonged to the same Semitic race. Abraham, the ancestor of the Israelites, was a Western Semite by origin. The sons of Jacob no doubt intermarried with the Semites of Canaan. As to the non-Semitic Hittites, due to the frequent intermarriages of the Israelites in Canaan with the native population (Judges 3.6), since their entrance into the country, there must have been a considerable admixture of Hittite blood in their veins. Many Israelites may have shown Hittite features. There was only one point that erected a barrier between the Israelites and the Canaanites dividing them into two nationalities, and this point was their religious beliefs. While the Israelites worshipped Jahveh, the Canaanites worshipped the Baalim. But this difference dated only from the time of the prophet Samuel (I Samuel 7.3-4), and was scarcely older than a century. In earlier periods, when the Israelites often became faithless to the God of Israel and served the Baalim, the distinctive marks that separated the Canaanites from the Israelites were completely wiped out. This similarity did not save them from the hatred and oppression of the native population, as it was natural that they should detest the invaders of their native land. They would have treated

their own kindred in the same way, if they had invaded their own country. Thus what the Israelites formerly suffered at the hands of the Canaanites cannot be attributed to racial differences. Now, however, if all the marks that separated the Israelites from the Canaanites could be obliterated, Northern Israel would become a kingdom inhabited by a perfectly homogeneous population, and there would be no reason for jealousy and hatred.

But the obliteration of the religious distinction between the two nationalities seemed a task nigh impossible. The Israelites on the whole regarded themselves faithful worshippers of the God of Israel. There may have been some among them who were still addicted to the worship of the Baalim. But the people at large served Jahveh exclusively. A suggestion on the part of Jeroboam that they should forsake the God of Israel and worship the Baalim of the Canaanites would have brought upon him the wrath of an overwhelming part of the Israelitish population, and his reign would have been of short duration. There is no need to assume that Jeroboam was incapable of proposing such a suggestion. He lived for several years in Egypt where he married a sister of the Egyptian queen, and there he may have become indifferent to Israel's religious conceptions. As brother-in-law of the Egyptian king, he certainly participated in the Egyptian divine worship. This he could freely do in accordance with the ancient religious conception, that a deity possesses no power outside of its dominion. The second commandment of the Decalogue: "Thou shalt have no other gods in My presence," was understood that one might not worship other gods within the dominion of Jahveh. The same conception was held by David who complained to Saul: "They have driven me out this day that I should not cleave unto the inheritance of the Lord, saying: Go, serve other gods" (I Sam. 26.19). Thus being outside of the dominion of Jahveh, Jeroboam could freely worship the Egyptian gods. But having done so

for some length of time, such a custom must have grown into a habit, and he was quite capable of doing it even in Israel. However, he was primarily a politician, and even if he had been by habit and inclination an idolator, he would not have done anything whereby he might have hurt the religious feelings of a large part of the Israelites and by such an act might have frustrated his aim to become king of Israel.

But it was just as difficult to persuade the Canaanites to forsake the Baalim and to worship exclusively the God of Israel. On the point of creed, the heathens showed themselves more faithful to their ancestral deities than Israel to Jahveh, as the prophet Jeremiah complains, saying: "Hath a nation changed its gods which yet are no gods? but My people hath changed its glory for that which doth not profit" (2.11). The very suggestion that they part with their religious belief would have been an unpardonable insult. We have raised the question whether Solomon permitted them to worship their ancestral deities and have said that there is good reason to answer this question in the affirmative, seeing that he had degraded them to the position of serfs and had deprived them of their ancestral estates. He certainly did not touch their spiritual inheritance, as we cannot credit Solomon with such an injustice. It would have been a contradiction in terms, declaring them on the one hand to be strangers who had no right in the inheritance of the Lord, and on the other hand imposing upon them the worship of the God of Israel. Thus Jeroboam could never have made such a proposition to the Canaanites. Their goodwill was for him of the utmost consideration.

We have referred to the ancient religious conception that no god could be worshipped outside of his own dominion. Nevertheless such a worship was well possible, if this god could be identified with an indigenous god of the country where the worshipper sojourned. By the same

token, Jahveh could be identified with Baal, and Baal could be identified with Jahveh. Thus the Canaanites could have worshipped their ancestral deities the Baalim in accordance with their customary rites, without any change, by identifying each of them with Jahveh. The Israelites, on the other hand, could have continued to worship Jahveh by adopting the manner of worship and the rites of the Baalim. This would mean that each of the Baalim was a representation and manifestation of Jahveh, the only God of Israel.

In the same way the Eastern colonists who had been transplanted to Samaria by the Assyrian kings Sargon, Esar-haddon, and Ashurbanipal could continue to worship their native gods, by identifying them with Jahveh the God of Palestine. But this identification was insufficient, without knowing the manner and the rites of the Jahveh-worship, and they had to be worshipped in the same way. Therefore when lions killed some of them, they saw in it a divine punishment, and informed the king of Assyria: "The nations which thou hast carried away, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land; therefore He hath sent lions among them" (II Kings 17.24-26). The priest from among the captive Israelites, who taught them the manner of the God of the land, did not teach them to forsake their native gods, but only to fear Jahveh. He shared the same conception that foreign gods might be identified with the indigenous gods and worshipped in the same manner and with the same rites. The religion of this priest was of a syncretistic character as practiced in Israel after the downfall of the Jehu-dynasty, when they worshipped Jahveh after the manner and with the immoral rites of the Baalim, as described by Hosea (4.1-15).

The exiled Israelites on coming to Assyria continued to worship Jahveh by identifying Him with one of the Assyrian gods but had to adopt at the same time the cult of the

native god with whom Jahveh was identified. Thus their worship of Jahveh was merely nominal. Their religious practices in the captivity were not different from those they practiced in their homeland, where they likewise worshipped Jahveh after the manner and with the rites of the Baalim. Different was the condition of the Judeans exiled to Babylonia. Due to the Universalistic doctrine which at that time was generally accepted by the worshippers of Jahveh, they could freely worship their God in the foreign surroundings, and there was no need for them to identify Him with one of the indigenous Babylonian gods. Those Judeans, however, who still held that Jahveh's power was limited to the land of Israel, if they wanted to continue to worship Him in the land of the captivity, were forced to identify Him with an indigenous god and to adopt for His service the foreign rites. Thus they were only nominally worshippers of Jahveh, like the exiled Israelites.

It is generally held that the worship of the Baalim in Canaan dates from an immemorial period. This is exceedingly questionable. There can scarcely be any room for doubt that each of these Baalim was merely a representative and emanation of *Ba'al*, the ancient supreme god of Palestine in the pre-Israelitish period. It is well known that in antiquity among all nations Temple and Palace was inseparable. The ruler of the state was at the same time the high priest of the god of the country and his viceroy. His advice and decisions were regarded as oracles pronounced in the name of the deity. In an early period, when Canaan was inhabited by a homogeneous population and formed a united state, there was only one Ba'al, the supreme god of the country. This was probably the case when Canaan was under the rule of the Amorites which would account for the name *Amurru* as that of the supreme god of Palestine. The identity of the name of the god and of his people makes it self-evident that he was

the supreme deity of all the Amorites. In a later period, however, when each little town constituted a state for itself, it was inevitable that each state should possess its own supreme deity, and consequently the single supreme god Ba'al was divided into a multiplicity of Baalim. In the same way, the Babylonian solar god Shamash possessed two centers of his cult, in North Babylonia, in Sippar, and in South Babylonia, in Larsa, because in an early period the two parts of the country, Shumer and Accad, formed separate states, and each state wanted to possess its own supreme solar god. The same holds true of the lunar god Sin who likewise possessed two chief centers in Ur and Harran, because these cities were situated in different states. We may refer also to Ishtar, the goddess of fertility who likewise had in Babylonia two chief centers of her cult, Erech in Southern Babylonia and Accad in Northern Babylonia. These three instances must not be confused with other cases where the identity of the deities merely rests on identifications and priestly speculations, as for instance the identity of Shamash, Marduk, Nergal, NIN-IB and Tammuz as solar deities. Shamash of Sippar and of Larsa were designated by the same name and possessed the same attributes. The same is true of Sin of Ur and of Harran, though the latter was designated also *Bel-Harran* "the Lord of Harran." The same is also the case with regard to Ishtar of Erech and Accad who are in every respect identical. Ba'al as god of agriculture was both solar god and god of the storm phenomena. These two aspects of his divinity are of course closely connected, as both sun and rain are necessary for the growth of vegetation. The same holds true of each of the Baalim, his representatives and emanations. If now Jahveh succeeded the pre-Israelitish Ba'al as the Supreme God of Canaan, it was inevitable that He should assume all attributes and functions of His predecessor, and the Baalim were bound to become His representatives and emanations. Thus there was no diffi-

culty in convincing the Canaanites that their Baalim were essentially identical with Jahveh, and in worshipping the latter they did not abandon the religious beliefs and practices of their ancestors.

However, these are merely religious speculations which may have impressed the priestly and educated classes of the Canaanites, but could scarcely carry any weight with the Canaanitic people at large, if the adoption of the Jahveh-cult meant the least change in their manner of worship, to which they were accustomed from immemorial times. People, in general, who judge everything by outward appearance, use the same judgment with regard to religion. The change in the essence and conception of a creed, though of fundamental importance, is for the average man of little or of no consideration at all, as long as he is not forced to break with the religious practices of the past. No religious creed can be successfully disseminated, if it does not take account of this human trait. Consequently the Jahveh-cult established by Jeroboam was bound to be of a syncretistic character in worshipping Jahveh in the manner and with the rites of the Baalim-worship. Thus the adoption of the Jahveh-religion by the Canaanites was purely nominal and did not result in a change of the manner of worship.

According to biblical traditions, such an event was already foreseen and feared by the Lawgiver of Israel: "When the Lord thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest in to dispossess them, and thou dispossessest them, and dwellest in their land; take heed to thyself that thou be not ensnared to follow them, after that they are destroyed from before thee; and that thou inquire not after their gods, saying: How used these nations to serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God; for every abomination to the Lord which He hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters do

they burn in fire to their gods" (Deut. 12.29-31). This does not mean, as the modern commentators explain, that the Israelites might be tempted to serve the gods of the country with the same rites which their predecessors had observed; and that the inquiry would be prompted by the feeling, not uncommon in antiquity, that the gods indigenous to a country may not be neglected with impunity. Such an interpretation is obviously against the sense of the context, which clearly states: "Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God," showing that such an eventuality, that the Israelites would serve the indigenous gods, was not referred to in this admonition. This injunction merely aims at the transference of heathen rites to the worship of the Lord. Such an eventuality was to be expected. Jahveh had become the God of Israel in the wilderness. Now in accordance with the national conception of a deity in antiquity, Jahveh's dominion would properly cease on Israel's entrance into the land of Canaan. His worship there could be continued only if he were identified with the gods of the country. But if so, it was necessary that He should be worshipped with the same rites as the indigenous gods with whom He had become identified. Therefore Israel is warned against an adoption of these rites in the service of Jahveh, seeing that they were of a nature that could not be reconciled with Israel's religion. A selection of some of the rites which were not reprehensible for the Jahveh-cult would not serve this purpose, as the fundamental conception of identification would require the adoption of all the rites of the indigenous gods for the Jahveh-cult, and not to select some of them and disregard the others. But such a wholesale adoption would be impossible, seeing that these rites included even the sacrifice of children, which is homicide, for which the penalty of death is imposed in Israel's religion. As a matter of fact, this rite does not seem to have been adopted by Jeroboam in the introduction of his

syncretistic Jahveh-cult, though it had been practiced no doubt by the Canaanites in the worship of the Baalim. On this point at least Jeroboam's Jahveh-cult was incomparably superior to that of Ba'al that was introduced by the Omri-dynasty.

The Jahveh-cult that the Canaanites adopted under Jeroboam was in every respect identical with that of the foreign colonists transplanted by the Assyrian kings into Samaria, to whom we have already referred, and may best be described by the words of the biblical historian, who said of these colonists: "They feared the Lord, and served their own gods" (II Kings 17.33). True, the same historian states that some of these colonists practiced human sacrifice (*ibid.* 17.31). But from Hosea 13.2, we know that this practice existed also among the Israelites during the last decades of the Israelitish state. Thus also on this point the colonists in their religious practices were not different from the Israelites, and the priest who taught them his syncretistic Jahveh-religion could not object to this practice. Now the very fact, that human sacrifice was practiced by the Israelites during the period of the Baalim-worship, shows that before Jeroboam it had been one of the rites of the Baalim-cult.

If Jahveh should be worshipped with the rites of the Baalim, such a worship could not be established without priests to whom these rites were thoroughly known. They could be performed only by those initiated into those rituals. There were certain symbolic rituals unknown to outsiders. But who should know them better than the Canaanitic priests who always performed them in the Baalim-sanctuaries? We may rest assured that the Levitical priests knew nothing about them. They would have been either useless for priestly offices in Jeroboam's sanctuaries or could serve only in inferior positions, presided over by the Canaanitic priests. It stands to reason that the Levitical priests, even those among them who were willing

to officiate in the North-Israelitish sanctuaries, were exceedingly reluctant to demean themselves in serving under the Canaanitic priests in an inferior capacity, and parting with their hereditary priestly prerogatives.

Among all nations with priesthoods, the king as viceroy of the deity and its visible representative upon earth was naturally of priestly rank, and as such possessed the right of offering sacrifices. The same privilege was claimed also by tribal chiefs, royal princes, representatives of the kings such as governors in their own districts, and other high officials. In such sacrifices, the official priests may have played the part of instructors, if the performers did not know the proper rituals. Thus the priestly office was not the exclusive prerogative of the priesthoods. It was the same in Israel. The king as the anointed of the Lord claimed priestly rank and officiated at sacrifices. So we find that king Saul himself offered a burnt-offering (I Sam. 13.9). So did David (II Sam. 6.17; 24.25), and also Solomon (I Kings 3.15). Notwithstanding the fact that the official chief priests were Zadok and Abiathar, it is distinctly stated: "And David's sons were priests" (II Sam. 8.18). The term *Kohanim* must be understood literally "priests," and not as the author of I Chronicles 18.17 renders this passage: "And the sons of David were chief about the king." The king's sons were of course the chief persons about the king, and no statement of that kind would seem necessary. Nevertheless, this rendering is essentially correct. By conferring the priestly rank upon his own sons, David invested them with the royal prerogatives and thereby they became the chief persons in Israel. The Levitical priests may have looked upon this practice as intrusion upon their prerogatives. But the people did not see any reason why their position should be more exclusive than that of the priesthoods of other nations, and their claim was generally disregarded. We may apply to this case the rabbinical maxim that a usage is stronger than

a law, and the Levitical priests had to submit to this usage without protest.

However, we may rest assured that the Levitical priests were by no means willing to forego their rights in favor of the Canaanitic priests or to accept a position in an inferior capacity. The statement that Jeroboam "made houses of high places, and made priests from among all the people that were not of the sons of Levi" (I Kings 12.31), which is amplified by the other statement that "whosoever would, he consecrated him, that he might be one of the priests of the high places" (ibid. 13.33), may be historically correct. Considering that in the establishment of his religious institutions, Jeroboam aimed at a policy of reconciliation, it seems quite credible that he did not prevent any member of the various tribes of Israel from entering into the priestly office. But we may well assume that certain qualifications were required for being admitted into the priestly office. There is a remarkable statement with regard to the priests: "and he placed in Beth-el the priests of the high places that he had made" (ibid. 12.32). For what reason did Jeroboam transfer the priests of the high places to Beth-el? It would seem that the high places were priestly schools where the men who were desirous of entering into the priestly office received instruction in the rituals and, if found proficient, they were transferred to the central sanctuary of Beth-el. The instructors of these schools were of course Canaanitic priests. We may assume that these schools were modelled after the Schools of the Sons of the Prophets founded by Samuel, and their students received a thorough education in reading, writing, music and other disciplines required for a priestly office. It is quite probable that dire need may have forced not a few of the Levitical priests to enter these schools, which were accessible also to them. And it is very likely that in the course of time most of the priestly offices were held by them. This may have been especially the

case after the passing of Jeroboam's dynasty, when the kingdom of Israel was firmly established, and there was no longer any need for the force of the Canaanites to repulse a Judean invasion, and they lost their importance as supporters of the throne. The later kings naturally preferred the hereditary priestly caste of Israel to the Canaanitic priests. This we may perhaps gather from Hosea's condemnation of the priests for their failure to teach the people the laws of their Lord, and held the priests responsible for Israel's misdeeds (Hosea 4.4-9). He obviously based his condemnation on the biblical law that imposes on the priests the duty of instructing the people in the laws of Israel's religion: "They shall teach Jacob Thine ordinances, and Israel Thy law" (Deut. 33.10), and this would be best explained, if the priests that he condemned had been of Levitical origin.

Bearing in mind that the Baalim were gods of agriculture, and specifically the gods of rain by which the soil is fertilized, we would expect the month that ushers in the rainy season to be sacred to them and their chief festival to be held during this month. Now in Palestine the rainy season began in the 8th month. In a later period, if the rain failed to come before the 17th of the 8th month, the pious people fasted three days, Monday, Thursday, and Monday. But if the rain failed to come at the beginning of the 9th month, public fast-days were ordained. From Jeremiah 36.9, we know that this was customary during pre-exilic times, as it is stated: "Now it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the ninth month, that they proclaimed a fast before the Lord, all the people in Jerusalem, and all the people that came from the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem." If Jahveh should be identified with the Baalim as God of rain, a great festival of His had to be celebrated in the 8th month at the beginning of the rainy season. But Israel's festival of Tabernacles occurred in the 7th month, and

it would have imposed a great hardship on the people to demand of them the celebration of festivals during two consecutive months. One of them had to give way. But the Canaanites would never have abandoned their great festival sacred to the Baalim. There was no other way out than to transfer the festival of Tabernacles into the 8th month. This is the meaning of the statement: "And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of this month, like unto the feast that is in Judah. . . . And he went up unto the altar which he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart" (I Kings 12.32-33). The biblical historian may not have known the reason for Jeroboam's selection of the 8th month, and therefore believed that Jeroboam devised it of his own heart, out of spite against Judah. However, there may be a deeper reason for the selection of the 8th month for this festival. In an early period, the year began with the month when the position of the vernal equinox was in the Zodiacal sign of Taurus, and this month was Nisan. Later, however, the position of the equinox was in the sign of Aries. But owing to the fact that the Baalim were represented by the images of a "bull," it is quite possible that their worshippers still continued to begin the year when the sun entered into the sign of Taurus, and disregarded the position of the equinox which had retrograded into the sign of Aries. If so, the Canaanitic 7th month reckoned from Iyyar corresponded to the Israelitish 8th month. Jeroboam also on this point adopted the Canaanitic usage, though it was not in agreement with the actual position of the equinox. The biblical historian may not have known this reason either, and said of it that Jeroboam devised this usage of his own heart.

Considering that Jeroboam adopted all the rites of the Baalim for his Jahveh-sanctuaries, it would seem strange that there is no reference to the planting of an *Asherah*

by this king. This could not have been an oversight on the part of the biblical historian, as seen of his description of the idolatrous conduct of king Ahab, of whom he wrote: "And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made the *Asherah*" (I Kings 16.31-33). Now the very fact that this feature of Baal-worship is ascribed to Ahab makes it obvious that during the former period it had not yet been introduced. True, about its existence in Judah during the period of Jeroboam there can be no doubt, as it is clearly stated: "And Judah did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. . . . For they also built them high places, and pillars, and *Asherim*, on every high hill, and every leafy tree" (ibid. 14.22-23). Of king Asa it is stated: "And also Maacah his mother he removed from being queen, because she had made an abominable image for an *Asherah*; and Asa cut down her image, and burnt it at the brook of Kidron" (ibid. 15.13). If so, we might reasonably argue that if an *Asherah* existed in Judah as a feature of Jahveh-worship, we would expect it the more to be found in the syncretistic sanctuaries of North Israel, established by Jeroboam. Nevertheless the argument from silence on the part of the biblical historian, who was far from being favorably inclined toward Jeroboam, and certainly would have stated it, if this feature had been in practice there, is surely of more force. But we might object to this argument in referring to Ahijah's prophecy where it is said: "And He will root up Israel out of this good land, which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the River; because they have made their *Asherim*, provoking the Lord" (ibid. 14.15). However, the very reference to the *Assyrian captivity* leaves no room

for doubt that we have here an expansion of the original prophecy in the light of the later practices of the Israelites. Now of Josiah it is indeed stated: "And also the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, even that altar and the high place he broke down; and he burned the high place and stamped it small to powder, and burnt the *Asherah*" (II Kings 23.15). But it is neither stated there that Jeroboam had made this *Asherah*, nor is it necessary to ascribe it to him, as it probably dates from a period when real idolatry prevailed in North Israel.

Now an *Asherah* during the Israelitish period was the symbol of Astarte, the goddess of fertility, the specific feature of whose worship was prostitution. It is noteworthy that in Hebrew this term *Asherah* has a double plural masculine and feminine, *Asherim* and *Asheroth*. This must not be compared with other Hebrew terms which have likewise a double plural, masculine and feminine. While among all the Semites the deity of fertility was of a feminine gender, among the Arabians this deity was of a masculine gender and was called *Athtar*. Even the Babylonian *Ishtar* may have been originally of a masculine gender. This assumption may be deduced from the fact that all the consorts of the chief Babylonian gods have feminine formations, as *Antum*, *Nin-lil*, *Damkina*, *Nin-gal*, *Aja* (*Malkatu*), *Gula*, *Eresh-kigal*, *Shala*, *Zarpanit*, and *Tashmetu*, with the exception of *Ishtar* whose formation in singular is masculine. Her feminine conception may date from the period of her identification with the Sumerian goddess of fertility, Nana of Erech. Among the Canaanites and Israelites both conceptions of Astarte may be due to Babylonian and Arabian influences. This would not be an isolated instance. The solar deity is among the Babylonians and other Semites of masculine gender but among the Southern Arabians of feminine gender. But the very fact that in Hebrew *Shemesh* "sun" is found with

both masculine and feminine constructions shows clearly that among the Hebrews the solar deity was conceived both as masculine and feminine. In a later period the sun was generally conceived as of feminine gender indicated by its poetical designation *Hammah* "the Hot One" (Isa. 24.23, 30.26; Cant. 6.10). The same holds true of the moon which had the poetical feminine designation *Lebanah* "the White One" (ibid.), though its old Hebrew name *Yareah* has everywhere masculine construction. It is possible that among the Aryan-Hittites as among the Greeks and Romans the moon was conceived as a feminine deity, and in the Hebrew feminine designation of the moon we might see Hittite-Aryan influence. The same might be true of the different conceptions of Astarte the deity of fertility as to its gender. In accordance with this difference the symbol of the feminine Astarte was an *Asherah*, and of the masculine *Ashtar* was an *Asher*. But the feminine conception prevailed, and both *Ashtar* and *Asher* disappeared. Thus of the earlier conception only the masculine plural *Asherim* remained. Considering that the worship of Astarte is closely connected with that of Baal, it is likely that the masculine *Ashtar* was superseded by Baal. Thus the *Asheroth* were dedicated to the service of the Astarte and the *Asherim* to that of Baal, though we cannot say in what way they may have differed. In accordance with this difference we find two classes of priestly persons attached to the service of prostitution, *Kedeshim* and *Kedeshoth*. The former had intercourse with women in the service of Baal, and the latter had intercourse with men in the service of Astarte. None of these priestly persons were established by Jeroboam in the Jahveh-sanctuaries he instituted.

It speaks well for Jeroboam's religious conceptions, that in his institutions he did not establish prostitution as a rite sacred to Baal and Astarte, nor that of human offerings of the Baal-worship. He was willing to accept all

Canaanitic rites for his syncretistic Jahveh-religion, but drew the line at those rites, murder and adultery, which would be irreconcilable with the moral code of Israel. Thus the change that Jeroboam effected in Israel's religion was essentially more of a ritual character than an apostasy from the God of Israel. To be sure, the adoption of the rites of the Baalim for the worship of Jahveh ostensibly meant the recognition of these deities, and this was nothing short of polytheism. This was indeed the conception of the author of Kings. However, this was after all only a polytheism by implication and speculation. The service in his sanctuaries was dedicated exclusively to Jahveh, the names of the Baalim with whom he was identified were not mentioned there, and if so, Jeroboam fully complied with the biblical injunction of the Book of the Covenant: "And make no mention of the name of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth" (Ex. 23.13).

Furthermore, in the investigation of this problem we must not overlook the fact that king Jehu, the follower of Elijah (II Kings 9.36), and the most zealous worshipper of Jahveh, who in the extermination of the Baal-worship went perhaps much further than was permissible (ibid. 10. 18-27), readily accepted the manner of Jahveh-worship as instituted by Jeroboam (ibid. 10.29-31), and had not the least compunction about this matter. His grandson Jehoash, who apparently was an ardent adherent of the prophet Elisha (ibid. 13.14), named his own son and successor to the throne *Jeroboam* after the founder of the kingdom of North-Israel. Surely this fact may be taken as sufficient evidence that the faithful worshippers of Jahveh in North-Israel did not look upon Jeroboam as one who had strayed away from Jahveh and served other gods. If this was the conception of Jehu and Jehoash, it is scarcely probable that Elijah and Elisha and their disciples had on this matter a different point of view. These prophets may have known the reason for Jeroboam's introduction of

Canaanitic rites into his sanctuaries, as a political stratagem for establishing thereby the union of his kingdom, and could not condemn him for it.

As to the Judean prophet Amos who designated the North-Israelitish Jahveh-worship as "the guilt of Samaria" (8.14), he may have expressed a Judean point of view, since in the Judean conception a worship with image-worship was an abomination unto the Lord. The prophet Hosea, the younger contemporary of Amos and his follower, adopted the same view, in calling this Jahveh-cult "the sin of Israel" (10.8). But though Amos disapproved of Israel's cult, he nowhere charges the Israelites with polytheism. He prophesied under the reign of the Jehu-dynasty, and the idolatrous practices condemned by Hosea had not yet existed during his activity. His condemnation of Israel is directed at the moral transgressions prevailing during this period, and against the belief that sins can be atoned for with sacrifices and the performance of rituals. His very protest against the conception of the Israelites that the worship of Jahveh consisted of sacrifices and rituals leaves no room for doubt that Amos did not deny that their sacrifices were offered exclusively to Jahveh and not to other gods. The same holds true of Hosea who said to Israel in the name of the Lord: "For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God rather than burnt-offerings" (6.6), and thus admitted that Israel's sacrifices were offered to Jahveh. Furthermore, if Amos and Hosea, as the other prophets, did not regard rituals and sacrifices as being a fundamental part of Israel's religion, they could not have condemned Jeroboam for having adopted Canaanitic rites, which were merely of an external nature, nor the Israelites who continued to practice them, as long as these rites were not contrary to Israel's fundamental doctrines which were of a purely ethical character. Surely this would have been illogical, a contradiction in terms. This must be true also of Elijah and

Elisha as of their disciples. An assumption that they did condemn Jeroboam's religion would force upon us the conclusion, that they fundamentally differed from the literary prophets, in seeing in Israel's rituals an integral part of the Jahveh-religion, and therefore objected to rituals adopted from the Canaanites.

Moreover, from a purely historical point of view, the origin of rituals is of no religious significance whatever. For there is little room for doubt that the Mosaic festivals and rituals were not originated by Israel's Lawgiver, but were adaptations of customs dating from a pre-Mosaic period, which Moses purified from idolatrous conceptions and brought into agreement with Israel's religion. According to biblical traditions, the ancestors of Israel sojourned for centuries in Canaan before their descent into Egypt. Now there is biblical evidence for the fact that the priestly function of the Tribe of Levi does not date from the time of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness, after the Sinaitic legislation, but is much older. This evidence is found in the First Book of Samuel (2.27-28): "And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him: Thus saith the Lord: Did I reveal Myself unto the house of thy father, when they *were in Egypt in bondage to Pharaoh's house?* And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be My priest, to go up unto Mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before Me? and did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings of the children of Israel?" Thus on biblical ground alone the conclusion is forced upon us that the rituals and offerings of Israel date from a pre-Mosaic period. If so, it is obvious that they were largely of Canaanitic origin. But we have seen that Jeroboam did not accept Canaanitic rites which were contrary to Israel's fundamental principles, such as sacrifice of children and the rite of prostitution, which meant adultery. We might thus contend that Jeroboam in adopting Canaanitic rites for his Jahveh-religion did the same in the tenth century

B.C.E. that Moses had done centuries before in legalizing customs and rituals which were of Canaanitic origin.

Concerning the identification of the Baalim with the God of Israel, this fact may also be looked upon from a different angle of vision, that it was not tantamount to Polytheism. We must remember that the transition of Polytheism into Henotheism and finally into Monotheism was essentially due to the idea of identifying a deity with various other deities and assigning to it all their powers, functions, and attributes. If the other gods did not lose their separate existence and still continued to exercise their functions, but only in the name of the Autocratic Supreme Deity and were thereby reduced to its ministers and executives, such a belief resulted in Henotheism. The final transition would be the stage of Monotheism, in which the other gods have no longer any separate existence and totally disappear. Believers in such a creed must absolutely deny the existence of any other divine beings in any capacity whatever.

The question arises now whether from a strictly traditional point of view, which assigns the Pentateuch as a whole to Mosaic authorship, Monotheism was the fundamental of the Mosaic religion. It is generally taken that this fundamental belief is clearly expressed in the words: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One" (Deut. 6.4). The same monotheistic principle is found also in the declaration: "Unto thee it was shown, that thou mightest know that the Lord, He is God; there is none else beside Him" (ibid. 4.35). However, how can we reconcile with such a monotheistic creed the Mosaic statement: "For the Lord your God, He is God *of gods*, and Lord of lords" (ibid. 10.17)? Does it not obviously concede the existence of other gods of an inferior rank subject to the God of Israel? Such a conception would not be monotheistic in the strict sense of the term but rather henotheistic. There is another statement which declares that other

nations may freely worship as gods the host of heaven: "And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun and the moon and the stars, even all the host of heaven, thou be drawn away and worship them, and serve them, *which the Lord thy God hath allotted unto all the peoples under the whole heaven*. But you hath the Lord taken and brought forth out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt to be unto Him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day" (ibid. 4.19-20). This statement certainly recognizes the divine nature of the host of heaven which all other nations ought to worship except Israel. Is there any possibility of reconciling it with the fundamental principle of Monotheism? Of less force is the evidence from the Song of Moses on the crossing of the Red Sea which reads: "Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods?" (Ex. 15.11), where it is declared that the Lord is superior to all other gods, and this is a henotheistic principle. We might say that this Song expresses the pre-Revelation belief of the Israelites which was far from having been of a monotheistic nature, as Joshua distinctly declared that in Egypt they had worshipped other gods (Joshua 24.14), which means that they worshipped also other gods beside the God of their ancestors. At that period their belief was similar to that of Jethro who exclaimed: "Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods" (Ex. 18.11). He recognized the Godhead of Jahveh as being supreme without denying the existence and the power of all other gods. However, the same conception may be seen in the didactic Song of Moses before his death, where he expressed himself that the God of Israel is stronger than any other god: "For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges" (Deut. 32.31). To be sure, in the same Song we meet with the statement: "They sacrificed unto demons, no-gods" (ibid. 32.17). Demons are beings whose existence might easily be denied as purely imaginary. But this is no evidence that Moses denied likewise the divine nature

of the host of heaven which as stars and planets are realities.

Now it is certainly unlikely that we should have in the Pentateuch contradictory conceptions concerning the existence of the heathen gods. It is more probable that the words: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One," express the Unity of the Lord as far as Israel was concerned, and do not imply the doctrine of an absolute Monotheism, which denies the very existence of all other gods: For Israel the other gods beside Jahveh are non-existent. The same may hold true of the other passage quoted above: "Unto thee it was shown that thou mightest know that the Lord, He is God; there is none beside Him." Thus in the Mosaic period Israel had not yet arrived at the stage of an absolute Monotheism. In the Pentateuch we have rather a State-Monotheism: for the people of Israel, Jahveh is the Only God. This creed is further amplified by the conception that He is incomparably superior to all other gods, and as such "the God of gods," and they are powerless to act against His will. What benefit can one derive from the worship of gods who are powerless to do good or evil? These gods are identified with the host of heaven. Each of them possesses his own territory allotted to him by the Lord Himself. All the people under the heaven are bound to worship and serve these gods by the will of Jahveh. It is His will not to interfere with the power of these gods in their own territories. But for Himself He took Israel as His own possession and among them none of the host of heaven may be worshipped.

Seeing that in accordance with the Mosaic expectations in the Pentateuch the Israelites were supposed to become the exclusive population of Canaan, Israel and the Land of Promise were identical terms, and the latter was expected to become the exclusive territory of Jahveh. But this did not mean to indicate that the surviving natives should be forced to become worshippers of Jahveh. On the contrary,

the very fact that the Israelites were exhorted not to take part in their sacrifices to their gods as they might lead them astray from the Lord (Ex. 34.12-13) shows clearly that the worship of Jahveh was not imposed on the natives who survived by virtue of their covenant with Israel. Owing to their survival after Israel's entrance into Canaan, Israel and the Land of Promise could not become identical terms, and Israel's religion could not become a State-Monotheism but became instead a National Monotheism. As a matter of fact, Israel's creed had a better chance of survival, if it was not bound up with the land of Israel and thus of a territorial character. In that case the creed would cease with the downfall of the State; while a national creed survives as long as a remnant of the nation is still in existence. In any locality, where the remnant of Israel settled down after the downfall of the State, there would be Jahveh's dominion. This national or tribal conception that the deity moves along with its people may be seen in the narrative of Jacob's descent into Egypt, as there God said unto Jacob: "I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will surely bring thee up again" (Gen. 46.4). But it stands to reason that this holds true only of a case like that of Jacob, when the nation or the tribe as a whole changes its habitat, not, however, if parts or individuals of a nation or tribe leave their native home. Therefore this conception cannot be applied to the Israelites carried off by the Assyrians, as only 27,290 persons were carried into captivity, while the overwhelming majority consisting of the poorer classes were left behind in Samaria, as we know from Sargon's cuneiform inscriptions; nor can it be applied to the Judeans carried into Babylonian captivity with Jehoiachin, as they numbered only 10,000. Be this as it may, one fact is certain: that the Canaanites were permitted to worship their ancestral gods, the Baalim. Their real existence as inferior gods, subject to Jahveh as the Supreme God of Israel, was never questioned, though the Israelites were not permitted

to worship them. But by being identified with the Baalim, Jahveh received all their powers, functions, and attributes, and the Baalim practically went out of existence, from an Israelitish point of view.

The conception of North Israel, with regard to the existence of the host of heaven as divine beings, subject to the supremacy of the God of Israel, is clearly seen in the vision of Micaiah the son of Jimlah who said: "I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right hand and on His left. And the Lord said: Who shall entice Ahab that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? And one said: On this manner; and another said: On this manner. And there came forth the spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said: I will entice him" (I Kings 22.19-21). In this vision is depicted the heavenly court presided over by Jahveh, where He takes counsel with the host of heaven as minor deities, which constitute His ministers, counselors, and courtiers of various ranks, as to the best means of enticing Ahab to go to war with the Arameans and get killed. The *Ruah* that undertakes this task must be a well-known deity, seeing that this term is written with the article: "The *Ruah*." This word properly means "the wind." Now Adad, identical with the Phoenician Baal, who is the West-Semitic god of the storm phenomena, is in cuneiform written DINGIR-IM which means: "the god of the Wind." It was this deity whose worship Ahab had introduced into Israel. It was proper that Ahab should be punished by the same deity which was wronged by him in establishing its worship within the dominion of Israel, and thus forced it to encroach upon a territory to which it had no right. Therefore Adad-Baal entered as a lying spirit into the mouth of all the prophets of Ahab. It is obvious that Micaiah's vision is fully in agreement with the religious conceptions of North Israel as established by Jeroboam, that the Baalim, as host of heaven, constituted the court of Jahveh, the Supreme

God of Israel. In Micaiah's vision we have the same scene as is found in the biblical Creation-accounts, where we must also assume that the Lord took counsel with His heavenly advisers as to the creation of man: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1.26) and as to the expulsion of man from the Garden of Eden, saying: "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil" (ibid. 3.22). The same conception is found also in the building of the Tower of Babel, where the Lord said: "Come, let us go down, and there confound their language" (ibid. 11.7). If this conception is henotheistic, so is the vision of Micaiah, and so is likewise the Jahveh-religion established by Jeroboam. In accordance with the belief in the existence of heavenly beings subject to Jahveh is the narrative that Elijah went up into heaven by means of a chariot of fire and horses of fire" (II Kings 2.11) and of Elisha who showed his servant that they were surrounded by horses and chariots of fire (ibid. 6.17). If the prophets and their adherents believed in the existence of heavenly beings in the shape of divine horses, they naturally may have believed likewise that divine beings existed also in the shape of other animals, and why not in that of heavenly bulls? This would be quite natural. If the Baalim were worshipped in the images of bulls, and their divine nature as minor deities was fully recognized by Israel, their heavenly shape must have been imagined to be that of bulls.

The belief in divine beings constituting the heavenly court of Jahveh was not restricted to the Northern Israelites. In Isaiah's theophany, the prophet sees Jahveh sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and above Him were standing the Seraphim, constituting His ministers and messengers. One of them touched the prophet's lips with a coal taken from the altar, and thereby his iniquity was taken away and his sin was expiated (6.1-7). From this vision we may certainly conclude that among the Judeans also the belief prevailed that the Lord in heaven was sur-

rounded by minor deities with various functions. There is hardly any room for doubt that these minor deities were identified with the host of heaven. The very designation of Jahveh as *Jahveh-Sebaoth* "the Lord of hosts," used innumerable times by all the prophets, with the exception of Ezekiel, means of course "the Lord of the hosts of heaven." There is a rabbinical saying: "The kingdom of the earth is like the kingdom in heaven," and a comparison of both kingdoms would not be inapt. If the officers of a terrestrial ruler are honored and looked upon with reverence among the people, can we imagine that they should have disregarded the members of the celestial court, without treating them with the highest respect as the ministers of the Lord? But such a conception might easily lead to polytheism, since the boundary line, between worshipping them as the Lord's servants who execute His will or paying them honors as divine beings who at their own discretion might deal leniently or severely as executives, was not so clearly defined. If the favor of the executives of a terrestrial king had to be solicited even by bribes, as was generally the case in antiquity, should not the same procedure hold true of the executives of the Heavenly King? This was the popular conception concerning the divine beings which constituted the heavenly court of Jahveh. Hence there is no surprise, if such a conception finally resulted in the worship of the host of heaven. They were regarded as the real executives of Jahveh's divine decisions, and as such deserved to be honored with prayers and offerings. Consequently the worship of Jahveh as the Supreme God of Israel receded into the background. Yet the worshippers would have indignantly denied the charge of polytheism, as in revering Jahveh's ministers, they practically meant His worship and recognition as the only God of Israel. Judging from Isaiah's theophany, his conception of Jahveh was henotheistic, and he was not a monotheist in the very sense of the term. His belief was identical with that of

Micaiah, which, as we have seen, was in agreement with the Jahveh-religion established by Jeroboam.

A similiar belief in the existence of divine beings as the ministers of Jahveh we find in the theophanies of the prophet Ezekiel (1.5-25; 9.1-11; 10.1-22; 11.22; 40.3; 43.2-4). There we meet with divine beings who are either the Bearers of the throne or chariot on which the Lord was sitting or the Wheels on which the throne or chariot was moving. The divine beings who bore the throne are designated *Hayyoth* "Living Beings." While having on the whole the shape of a human body, each of them on his four sides had different faces: One of a Man, and the other three of a Lion, an Eagle, and an Ox. We may venture the suggestion that these celestial Living Beings were conceived by the prophet to be the heavenly images of the foremost representatives of the terrestrial living beings: The Lion as the king of the wild beasts; the Eagle as the king of the fowls under the heaven; the Ox as the most powerful and useful among the domesticated animals; and the Man as an intellectual being and final aim of the creation. Now the wheels of a terrestrial chariot are made either of wood or metal; thus they are inanimate and cannot move by their own will, but must be set into motion by an external force. The same is the case of the Celestial Wheels of the divine chariot. Though being divine and full of eyes, they cannot move of their own free will, but are animated by the spirit of the Living Beings which is in them and are forced to follow their movements (Ezekiel 1.15-20; 10.9-13, 16-17). In these Celestial Wheels the prophet may have seen the representatives of inanimate forces into which the spirit of the living beings upon earth is infused and by which it is set into motion. In Ezekiel's second vision we find also the seven Divine Beings who are commanded by the Lord to destroy Jerusalem (9.1-2; 4-7; 11; 10.2). In this third vision the prophet meets with the Divine Being who laid out the plan for the building of the New Jerusalem (40.3-43.6).

In Ezekiel's visions can be seen the belief of the strict worshippers of Jahveh in the Babylonian captivity, that the will of the God of Israel is carried out by His divine messengers and executives. Now if we compare their belief with that of the Babylonians, the contrast is not so striking as it may seem. Bēl-Marduk was conceived as the supreme god of Babylonia, and the other gods were regarded as being his subjects. But while Marduk's position was that of a suzerain and the other gods occupied the position of vassals, Jahveh was conceived as an Autocratic Ruler Whose executives were bound to carry out His will, exactly as they were commanded, without doing it at their own discretion. However, such a distinction could be perceived only by those who possessed a deep insight into the conceptions of both Israelitish and Babylonian creeds. Such a knowledge could not be expected of the Judean people at large. On this point they could not find any difference between their own religion and that of the Babylonians. If the Babylonians venerated all their gods, though being subject to their supreme lord Bēl-Marduk, was there any reason for the Israelites not to worship the divine beings subject to Jahveh? The chief gods of the Babylonians were of a planetary character. The Israelites likewise saw in the host of heaven the servants of the God of Israel. Why should they not have identified the Babylonian gods with the host of heaven in whom they saw the servants of Jahveh? In doing so, they might have contended that they worshipped their own God in paying honors to His executives. From such a point of view they could easily identify Jahveh with Marduk the supreme god of the Babylonians. They might not have seen any transgression in fashioning images of the host of heaven, as did the Babylonians, though they did not worship Jahveh in an image. Thus it is seen that the recognition of divine beings as the ministers of the Lord could easily lead to polytheism even by those Judeans who were devout worshippers of the God of Israel. Such a tran-

sition to polytheism would have been made more difficult, if an absolute Monotheism had been established, a creed that denied the existence of any other divine being outside of Jahveh. But the conception that the Godhead carries out its will through minor deities was so deeply rooted in the minds of all people in antiquity, that the proclamation of an absolute Monotheism would have been to the Judeans inconceivable, and would have had no chance of survival. The nearest approach to such a creed was the Mosaic Monotheism, in which the divine beings were reduced to automatic servants of the Lord, without having discretionary powers of their own.

Now it seems that the prophet Jeremiah actually denied the existence of all other gods beside Jahveh: "Hath a nation changed its gods, which are no gods?" (2.11). But this passage may also be rendered: "even if they were no gods," and purely imaginary, and does not refer to the worship of the host of heaven at all. This prophet ridicules the worship of idols: "For the customs of the peoples are vanity; for it is but a tree which one cutteth out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workmen with the axe. They deck it with silver and gold, they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not; they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, neither is in them to do good" (ibid. 10.3-5). But there is no argument against the worship of the host of heaven. It would thus seem that Jeremiah is in full agreement with Deuteronomy 4.19, which approves of their worship by the heathen nations. This fact we may even gather from the opening lines of this chapter: "Thus saith the Lord: Learn not the way of the nations, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the nations are dismayed at them" (ibid. 10.2). This evidently means that the nations are subject to the influences of the host of heaven, with the exception of Israel over whom they have no power. As a matter of fact, in this discourse the prophet

Jeremiah leaves no room for doubt that he shares the conception of all other prophets that the Lord is supreme over all divine beings, and none could be compared with Him: "There is none like unto Thee, O Lord; Thou art great, and Thy name is great in might. Who would not fear Thee, O King of the nations? for it befitteth Thee; forasmuch among all the nations (sic!), and in all their royalty, there is none like unto Thee" (ibid. 10.6-7). This is surely an admission that there are powerful gods among the nations, but there is none to be compared with Jahveh, and He is their Supreme Lord, and as such the King of the nations.

Now if we investigate the discourses of the exilic anonymous prophet, the so-called Deutero-Isaiah, we find that he repeatedly emphasized the monotheistic nature of the God of Israel, and we would be inclined to conclude that this prophet at least proclaims the absolute Unity of the Lord and denies the existence of any other divine beings. The passages describing the incomparable greatness and might of Jahveh do not prove that this prophet contends that other divine beings which were far beneath Jahveh were non-existent. Nor do they express any new conception which was formerly unknown. Nevertheless the prophet was compelled to dwell on this point as a protest against those Judeans who identified Jahveh with the Babylonian supreme god Bēl-Marduk. But there are numerous other passages which distinctly declare the non-existence of other gods (44.6, 8; 45.5-7, 14, 18, 21-22; 46.9; 48.12). Surely the statements: "I am the first, and I am the last, and beside Me there is no god," or "I am the Lord, and there is none else," and similar phrases, express the idea of a pure Monotheism.

There would be no difficulty, if we should assume that Deutero-Isaiah actually denied the existence of any divine being beside Jahveh, and on this point differed from Isaiah, Ezekiel, and from similar conceptions found in the Pentateuch. We have pointed out the danger of a belief in the

existence of minor deities beside Jahveh, and how easily it could lead to polytheism. The exilic prophet may have fully recognized this danger, and his discourses concerning the absolute Unity of the Lord might have been actually directed against this belief. But if so, why should he have dwelt on the folly of worshipping gods of wood and metal, and not have ridiculed the worship of the host of heaven? What argument could this prophet advance against the worship of the host of heaven as servants of Jahveh? Surely he argues against the worship of the planets and stars as real gods who decide the fate of man of their own will: "Lift up your eyes on high, and see: Who hath created these? He that bringeth out their host by number, He calleth them all by name" (40.26). But this would be a correct argument against worshipping them as independent deities, not, however, as the executors of His Divine will. Their worshippers did not deny that they were created by Him, but for the purpose of executing His will, and as such deserved veneration. Or shall we assume that this exilic prophet rejected the views of Isaiah and Ezekiel with regard to the real existence of angels as the divine messengers of Jahveh, and in the same way did not see in the host of heaven the executives of Jahveh? His argument against astrology: "Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels; let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from the things that shall come upon thee" (ibid. 47.13), cannot be taken as an argument against paying honors to the host of heaven as the ministers of Jahveh. This means only that the Chaldeans will look in vain for a favorable omen from the signs and movements of the stars, as it would be unfavorable in accordance with the will of Jahveh. There is no way for the solution of this difficulty other than in presuming that at the period of this exilic prophet, the Judean captives at whom his discourses were aimed had already passed the transition-stage of worshipping the host of heaven as ministers subject to the will

of Jahveh. They had already become outright polytheists, like the Babylonians, and worshipped the host of heaven as gods possessing discretionary powers, their position being that of vassals of Jahveh over whom He reigned as suzerain, without interfering with their activities, in carrying out the decisions arrived at in the heavenly council of the gods, and identified them with the Babylonian gods under the suzerainty of Bēl-Marduk with whom Jahveh was identified. The prophet fully perceived the original cause of their apostasy, being due to their belief in the existence of divine beings as the executors of Jahveh's will, and therefore repeatedly emphasized the Unity of the God of Israel, in declaring that there is no other divine being beside Him. In this prophet we may indeed see the first spiritual leader in Israel who proclaimed the doctrine of a rigid Monotheism and therein went further than the Mosaic religion and all his prophetic predecessors. The logical outcome of this doctrine was that Israel could freely worship Jahveh in all countries and among all nations, without paying any attention to their national and territorial deities, as they were non-existent and pure invention, and as such should be utterly disregarded, seeing that there is no divine being beside Jahveh. As long as Jahveh was conceived as the God of gods, it was a mooted question whether it was permissible to ignore these servants of Jahveh, in their own territorial dominion allotted to them by their Lord, in not venerating them as divine beings, constituting the heavenly court of Jahveh. We have seen that this conception was indeed the cause of apostasy among the Judeans in Babylonia, and was a stumbling-block in the way of an exclusive Jahveh-worship. But this exilic prophet rejected the conception of a heavenly court, in denying the existence of any divine being beside Jahveh. We have referred to the rabbinical saying: "An earthly kingdom is like the heavenly kingdom." But as a matter of fact, this exilic prophet, who denied the conception of a celestial court, did not believe

in the establishment of a royal court in Israel either. In his discourses there is not the least reference to a restoration of David's kingdom or to the rise of a Messiah as king of Israel. Also on this point he differed from his prophetic predecessors, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, who predicted the restoration of the kingdom of David.

It stands to reason that this doctrine of a rigid Monotheism as proclaimed by this exilic prophet was too paradoxical to be acceptable to the Jewish people at large. If we are right in our conclusion that he denied the existence of divine beings as servants of Jahveh, this doctrine was certainly rejected by his prophetic successors. The prophet Zechariah, who may have been one of the disciples of this exilic prophet, taught the doctrine that the Lord no longer revealed Himself to the prophets but delivered to them His message by the mediation of angels, and in his visions angels are the mediators between him and the Lord (1.9-13; 2.2-8; 3.1-5; 4.1-14; 5.1-11; 6.1-8). The divine beings whom he saw in his visions were not only in human shape. The red horse on whom he saw the angel riding in his first vision was of course likewise a divine being. The horses whom the prophet saw behind the angel played the part of messengers of the Lord, of whom the angel said: "These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth," and who answered him: "We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest." We have here the same conception of divine horses that we have found in the narratives of Elijah and Elisha to which we have referred, and of which we have seen that such a conception was in agreement with the Jahveh-worship of North Israel as established by Jeroboam.

In his visions, Zechariah also saw angels in the shape of craftsmen (2.3-4), of a man with a measuring line to measure Jerusalem (2.5-6), of women with wings like the wings

of a stork (5.9-11). Here also we meet for the first time a divine being called Satan standing at the right hand of the high priest Joshua to accuse him (3.1-2), and also the divine personification of wickedness in the likeness of a woman (5.5-8). There might be some truth in the suggestion that the development of conceptions of that kind is to be ascribed to the influence of the Persian religion, in which angels play the part of mediators between *Ahura-mazda*, the Supreme God of the Persians, and his votaries, and also in which the *Daēvas*, the pre-Zoroastrian deities, play the part of the evil spirits. But this does not mean that conceptions like those were formerly unknown in Israel. Zoroastrianism may have helped to preserve ideas of that kind among the Judeans and may even have led to their further development, notwithstanding their monotheistic creed. The belief in divine beings, both anthropomorphic and theriomorphic, was of course common during the pre-exilic times. With the Satan may be compared the spirit that went out from the Lord and became a lying spirit in the mouth of the prophets of Ahab (I Kings 22.19-23), and the evil spirit of Saul of whom it is stated: "Now the spirit of the Lord departed from him, and an evil spirit from the Lord terrified him" (I Sam. 16.14). But it would have been a contradiction in terms to believe in angels and evil spirits as being the messengers of Jahveh and at the same time to deny the existence of the heathen gods which their worshippers identified with the host of heaven. Thus it was reasonable to see in these beings members of the heavenly court over which Jahveh presided. This was the identical conception held in the pre-exilic period in North Israel and we have seen that it did not differ from that of Isaiah and Ezekiel. The only proponent of a rigid Monotheism was the unknown exilic prophet, and he did not have any follower who propagated his doctrine. There was no development of the belief in Jahveh in a monotheistic direction. On the contrary, the later conception was even less mono-

theistic. This is seen in the Book of Daniel (10.13, 20; 12.1). There we find the belief that each nation possesses its own guardian angel who is a member of the heavenly court and the protector of his own people, for whose existence and power he fights and pleads before the Lord. Though there are mentioned only the Prince of Persia and the Prince of Greece, beside Gabriel and Michael as the Princes of Israel, it stands to reason that all other nations also had their own Princes as members of the heavenly court. The identification of the Princes of the nations with their chief gods is obvious. Even Israel, though being the people of Jahveh, is not excepted, and needs protectors in the heavenly court. It has two Princes, Michael and Gabriel, in accordance with its dual nationality Judah and Israel. These angels are certainly not automatic executors of Jahveh's decisions but possess a will of their own, though powerless against the will of Jahveh. This was the conception of later Judaism.

The Rabbis do not seem to have had any objection to such a belief from a monotheistic point of view, though it might be questioned whether it is strictly in harmony with a rigid Monotheism. They fully believed in the existence and reality of the angels. However, of special interest is the angelological conception of Maimonides who seems to have solved this problem in reconciling Monotheism with such a belief. In describing the Physical World as the divine creation, he says: "There are also some that are created in *forms* without any *substance* at all: these are the angels, as they have neither bodies nor corporeal substances but mere forms which are separated one from another. All this is meant in the prophetic vision and parable to indicate that an angel has no gravity like other gravitational bodies. . . . But in what respect are these forms separated one from another, seeing that they are without bodies? The separation is due to the fact that they are not of the same grade in their existence, as one is

beneath the other and owes his existence to the power of the other. But what we said that one is beneath the other, this does not refer to the place he occupies, as a man who sits higher than the other. It is meant as one says of two scholars, that the wisdom of one is greater than that of the other." Now if the angels have no bodily substance and are not separated one from another in space but in their qualities, this can only mean that they are mere manifestations and emanations of the Divine Essence with which they are united, and they are of different grades. Who knows whether Maimonides did not perceive that the current conception of angels was irreconcilable with a pure Monotheism, and by his definition tried to reconcile them?

CHAPTER II

The popular conception of religion—The prophetic teachings—The ill success of the prophetic activity—Isaiah's view on sacrifices and rituals—Ritualistic performances by immoral persons—The breach between the prophets and the priests—Idealism versus Realism—The liberal attitude of the priests—The piety of Judean kings due to their influence—Their chief function of teaching—"Their teaching for hire"—The protest of Micah—The ignorance of the poor—The priestly principle of Truth and Peace—Different views concerning external forms of worship—The divine origin of the priestly ordinances—The statement of Amos on sacrifices—Its various interpretations—Hosea's view—The erroneous interpretation of Isaiah's views on rituals—Micah's position—His fundamental religious principles—Psalm 15—Micah's Messianic message—Jeremiah's conception concerning sacrifices—Its correct interpretation—His exhortation on Sabbath-observance—The priestly prophet Joel—His concern for the regularity of sacrifices—The date of the thought—Jeremiah's reference to the same event—A comparison of Jeremiah's address with that of Joel—Joel a true representative of the priests—His style—The criterion of a true prophet—The conditional nature of prophecy—The priestly prophet Ezekiel.

IN THE preceding chapter we dwelt on the investigation of Jeroboam's cult, whether its establishment meant a departure from the monotheistic doctrine of Israel. Now the question whether this doctrine has as its corollary the denial of the reality of all other deities beside Jahveh was of utmost importance for Israel's spiritual leaders, especially during the period of captivity, when Israel dwelt scattered among polytheistic nations. It was of minor importance for the people at large in their Jahveh-worship in their own homeland, in the dominion of Jahveh, where the worship of other gods was prohibited by Israel's main doctrine in the Decalogue: "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me" (Ex. 20.3; Deut. 5.7). For them, the question of the reality of these beings was of no consideration at all, seeing that this prohibition included also the worship of the host

of heaven, though their divine character was fully conceded for other nations, except Israel, as the exclusive people of Jahveh. Yet this concession carried within itself a germ of destruction, as the reality of the Canaanitic Baalim, as solar deities, could not be denied, and the question arose whether they should not be worshipped as the servants of Jahveh and executors of His will as agricultural deities. From the pages of biblical history we know that this actually happened, so that the worship of Jahveh in Israel became purely nominal. The worship of the Baalim by the Israelites may have differed from that of the Canaanites. As servants of Jahveh, they were worshipped in the manner and with the rites of the Jahveh-worship. Believing they served Jahveh in revering His servants, the idea of apostasy never entered their minds. What we said of the Canaanites holds true also of the Israelites. The conception of a creed, though of a fundamental character, is for the average man of little or no consideration at all, if there is no break with the past in his customs and rituals. In his life, the external manner of worship plays a part superior to its ethical concept. We may readily admit that this is not an ideal state of affairs, but it is human nature that judges everything by its outward appearance and uses the same judgment on the point of religion, and it is nigh impossible to change human nature. The prophet Samuel was well aware of this fact, in observing: "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (I Samuel 16.7). It would have been a superhuman task to render man so godlike as to see with the eyes of God.

Nevertheless this task was undertaken by Israel's prophets. It was the fundamental idea of almost all of them that outward manner of worship, ceremonies, and rituals were of no value at all, and they insisted upon the moral observances of the religion of Jahveh. The ill success of their prophetic activity in Israel may safely be attributed to this ideal conception. The people at large

both in Israel and Judah may have been horrified on hearing prophets denouncing sacrifices as not being a requirement of the religion of Israel, uttered by Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, and Jeremiah, and looked upon them as being nothing short of heretics and blasphemers. How could they accept moral instruction from teachers who held such views? Not doubting in the least that the commandments concerning the ceremonial observances constituted an essential part of the Mosaic religion, how could the people venerate these men as inspired prophets, and accept their teachings? In expressing views of that kind, which were absolutely true, if rightly understood, they discredited their mission in the eyes of the common people. They did not impress them by their moral teachings, though they spoke in their own behalf, denouncing the oppressors, dishonest judges, and all manner of wrong and immorality.

But the prophets held that they could not speak differently. As God-inspired prophets they could utter only the absolute truth which was bound to hurt the sensibilities of the people. Yet if we may use a parable, we would say that the naked truth is treated as a naked person who walks abroad, which would be regarded as exceedingly indecent. Truth can walk among the people only if it borrows a garment from falsehood. Thus dressed it still remains truth and loses nothing thereby. In disregarding such a policy, and not trying to make the truth palatable to the people at large, their mission was a failure, and they were actually persecuted by the same classes of the people in whose defense they arose to protect them from the oppressors and evil-doers. These prophets became the targets of hostility on the part of both rich and poor, pious and impious. The people who devoutly listened to their discourses and sincerely believed in them as being divinely inspired constituted an insignificant number. The prophet Ezekiel and the post-exilic prophets and teachers of course acted differently. Though emphasizing the moral obliga-

tions as strongly as their predecessors, they regarded the ceremonial observances as an absolute necessity for the preservation of Israel's religion.

We may well say that morals and ceremonial observances constitute the soul and body of any creed of a moral standard. In this physical world of realities, it cannot dispense with either of them, and both are necessary for its existence. The soul is certainly its real substance, and the body is nothing but its garment. But without this garment, it would remain invisible to human eyes and be practically of no use to humanity. By the same token, if the Israelites had complied with those prophetic ideas in accepting their moral teachings, and abandoning at the same time prayers, rituals, sacrifices, and festivals, there would have been nothing that should remind them of the covenant of the Lord with their ancestors. The divine origin of these moral teachings was bound to be forgotten, and there would have been no longer any obligation for the people to follow their dictates, as man without being restrained by religion would naturally follow the line of least resistance.

However, we argue only from the standpoint of modern scholars who maintain that the prophets to whom we referred were opposed to all outward manner of worship. If modern scholars hold such a view, it is well likely that the contemporaries of the prophets who rejected their religious teachings understood them in the same sense. Nevertheless this view, no matter whether held in antiquity or not, is utterly wrong. Surely the prophets could not have had the least objection to sacrifices and rituals, if the people had not been morally corrupt. Even if they should have deprecated rituals as of no ethical value, there would have been no harm in doing them, as their intention was to honor the Godhead thereby, in accordance with a usage coming down from immemorial times. The objection of the prophets to all outward signs of religion was due to the fact that the

people at large considered them the sum and substance of the Jahveh-worship, and disregarded all obligations toward their fellowmen as of no religious significance whatever. So Isaiah, in his protest against the offering of sacrifices and visiting the sanctuary on the appointed seasons, expressed himself: "I cannot endure iniquity with solemn assembly" (1.13), and further: "When ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood" (1.15). He would have had no objection to solemn assembly without iniquity, or to prayers with clean hands. But even so, it is a mooted question whether wicked people should be advised to keep away from the sanctuaries, and not spread out their hands in prayer to God. The priests of Jerusalem might have turned the tables on the prophets in accusing them that by their uncompromising attitude, they drove the people completely away from the religion of Jahveh to that of Baal or some other deities.

The question whether people of immoral conduct should be permitted to offer sacrifices was a fundamental issue and was bound to create a breach between the prophets and the priests. The prophets regarded it as a perversion of Israel's religion that one should practice all kinds of immorality and yet by virtue of observing rituals and ceremonies be accounted a worshipper of Jahveh, which would be destructive of all moral principles. The prophetic position is clearly stated by Jeremiah: "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and offer unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye have not known, and come and stand before Me in this house, whereupon My name is called, and say: 'We are delivered,' that ye may do all these abominations? Is this house, whereupon My name is called, become a den of robbers in your eyes?" (7.9-11). Divesting this speech of the biblical phraseology, it claims that the most corrupt people appear before Jahveh, and offer sacrifices to Him, and thereby believe they have gained His favor, and under His protection may continue

to commit all abominations. This obviously refers to wicked men who under the protection of Baal did not succeed in their enterprises, and were now confident that they would fare better under Jahveh's protection. We may of course read between the lines that Jeremiah held the priests responsible for this perverse popular conception, as he states in another discourse: "From the prophet even unto the priest, every one dealeth falsely" (8.10), in not ridding the temple of worshippers of that type. He accused them of greed. If they had refused to accept the offerings of the wicked, their income would have been considerably reduced. But we may rest assured that the priests bitterly resented such an accusation. They earnestly believed that a refusal to accept the sacrifices of immoral people would completely sever the bond between them and Jahveh. They feared to bear the responsibility of driving them away from Jahveh, saying: Go ye, serve other gods! It is very likely that this controversy did not rise just in the days of Jeremiah, as similar conditions must have existed in earlier periods, and Jeremiah's opinion would have been shared by earlier prophets.

There was a fundamental difference between the prophets and the priests. The prophets were idealists and the priests realists. The former aimed at the materialization of the idealistic and eternal truth they beheld in their visions. They were never satisfied with a minimum of success or even a considerable part of it in their religious activity. If they had had their own way in the realization of their ideals, they would have disregarded all obstacles due to existing conditions and human nature. The early prophets, Ahijah, Jehu, Elijah, and Elisha, who predicted the downfall of the dynasties of Jeroboam, Baasa, and Omri, were not satisfied with the death of the reigning kings and their legal heirs, but demanded the complete extermination of these royal houses (I Kings 14.10; 16.3; 21.21; II Kings 9.8). And their sentences were literally

carried out (I Kings 15.29; 16.11; II Kings 10.17). In the execution of their verdicts, there was none more ruthless than Jehu the adherent of Elijah (II Kings 9.36; 10.10). The prophets did not believe in half-measures. If the later prophets had been given power to deal with the transgressors of Israel, they would have acted according to the adage: *Fiat justitia, ruat caelum*. There was indeed a period in the history of Israel, when their influence was paramount, and the government was completely guided by their principles. We refer to the reign of Josiah. Though this king relentlessly put down all opposition to the worship of Jahveh, the achievement was of short duration. This shows the futility of changing human habits by force and decrees of the government. Soon after the death of this idealistic king, the religious conditions became as bad as before, if not worse, as Jeremiah testified: "According to thy cities are thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to Bosheth, even altars to offer unto Baal" (11.13). There can scarcely be any room for doubt that the priests of Jerusalem were not responsible for the relentlessness of this king toward all idolatrous and polytheistic practices. The priests were always hard-headed, practical men who took into account existing conditions and human psychology in their spiritual leadership. The prophetic truths were their guiding principles. They also aimed at approaching ideal conditions. But they proceeded step by step, and were satisfied, if the people did not lose sight of these ideals altogether. As teachers of the Mosaic religion, they were acting as guides, showing Israel the paths leading to the ideals, preceding them and expecting them to follow in their footsteps. They never used force, and never threatened them, if they strayed away. Peaceful persuasion was their only means in their spiritual guidance. If some of the flock that had strayed away found their way to the temple of Jerusalem to honor the Lord with gifts

and offerings, the priests did not investigate the reason of this return, but received them in friendly fashion and freely accepted their offerings. This tolerant attitude toward people of that type was surely more effective in leading them back into the fold than denunciations of their past and investigation of their conduct and belief.

If the priests of Jerusalem, under the reigns of impious rulers such as Jehoram, Ahaziah, Athaliah, and Ahaz, were able to keep the temple free from idolatrous practices, and none of them interfered with their traditional worship of Jahveh, it was exclusively due to their sagacity and practical policy. They knew when to speak and when to keep silence. Being convinced of the futility of remonstrating with these rulers and reproving their conduct, they closed their eyes and pretended perfect ignorance of their misdeeds, and received them as faithful worshippers of Jahveh, whenever they were inclined to enter His sanctuary. If they had acted differently, in showing themselves troublesome by condemning these rulers for their faithlessness to the God of Israel, their priestly activity in the sanctuary would have been of brief duration. They would have been substituted by priests whose religious conception did not differ from that of these rulers. The latter would not have had the least scruples in reforming the worship of Jahveh in the sanctuary in accordance with their own religious beliefs. It must be borne in mind that this sanctuary was a royal institution. This can be seen from the fact that the kings could freely dispose of its treasures and votive offerings, as did Asa (I Kings 15.18), Ahaz (II Kings 16.8), and Hezekiah (ibid. 18.15). The priests of the sanctuary were royal officers whom the king could depose at will, just as Solomon deposed Abiathar (I Kings 2.27). The king could establish there the worship of other gods beside Jahveh, as did Manasseh (II Kings 21.4-7). But even this king did not force the priests to officiate at the altars of the idols. For such a contention we have the testimony of the

prophet Ezekiel who states "But the priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of My sanctuary, when the children of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near to Me, to minister unto Me" (44.15). This clearly proves that the priests proverbially minded their own business and closed their eyes to all the abominations of this king. While many prophets no doubt suffered the death of martyrs under the reign of this bloody ruler (II Kings 21.16; 24.4; Jer. 15.4), the priests of this sanctuary do not seem to have shared this fate. They kept quiet and waited for better times to come.

There can be very little doubt that the priests had a hand in the conspiracy against the young king Amon who followed the ways of his father Manasseh, with whom they had not the least influence. It was different with his successor Josiah, who was at his accession a child of eight years and knew nothing about the religious conditions. The royal palace being closely connected with the temple, the priests could easily find access to him and imbue him with their religious conceptions. His zeal for restoring the worship of Jahveh in Judah may be safely ascribed to the influence of the priests. But it is very probable that later he came under the influence of the prophets, by whose advice he was guided in extirpating every institution not in agreement with the Mosaic Law. That he was a firm believer in the prophets is seen from the fact that he sent to the prophetess, Huldah, to inquire of her concerning the discovery of the Book of the Law (I Kings 22.12-20). But Josiah was not the only king whose conversion was due to priestly influence. The same was the case with Hezekiah. Otherwise, it would seem exceedingly strange that Hezekiah should have been quite untouched by the irreligious conduct of his father, Ahaz, and proved himself to be such an exceptional king, that the biblical historian could say of him: "He trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel; so that after him there was none like him among all the kings of

Judah, nor among them that were before him" (II Kings 18.5). Now biblical chronology gives him an age of 25 years on his accession (ibid. 18.2). But if Ahaz was 20 years old at ascending the throne and reigned 16 years, as biblical chronology states (ibid. 16.2), Hezekiah would have been born when his father Ahaz was at the age of 11, which is of course impossible. However, historical investigation leaves no room for doubt that Ahaz ascended the throne during the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion of Judah (about 735 B.C.E.). And since it is stated that the fall of Samaria occurred in the sixth year of Hezekiah (ibid. 18.10), and this chronological date is supported by two other chronological data (ibid. 18.1, 9), Hezekiah must have succeeded his father Ahaz in 727. This is further confirmed by an oracle against the Philistines, occasioned by the death of Tiglathpileser IV in the same year (Isaiah 14.29-32), and its superscription reads: "In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden" (ibid. 14.28). Thus Ahaz reigned only 8 years. Now the only obstacle to an identification of Hezekiah with Immanuel (ibid. 7.14) is the biblical date that Hezekiah was at the age of 25 at his accession. But we have seen that this date is physically impossible. Thus Hezekiah was born during the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion about 735, and was about 8 years old at the death of his father, so that he could not have been influenced by his idolatrous conduct. He no doubt came later under the influence of Isaiah by whose advice he was guided during his whole reign. But it is not likely that this prophet should have found easy access to the young king, seeing that the Queen-Mother and her courtiers, who conducted the affairs of the state during his minority, were religiously not better than Ahaz. It was to this period that Isaiah referred: "As for My people, a babe is their master, and women rule over him. O My people, thy leaders cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy path" (3.12). Thus Hezekiah's conversion

in his early years was likewise due to the priests of the chief sanctuary.

Going back to the reign of Joash, of this king it is plainly stated that his pious conduct was due to the priestly influence: "And Joash did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him" (II Kings 12.3). The same happened also in an earlier period. King Asa who succeeded his brother Abijam was obviously a minor at his accession, and the government was in the hands of the Queen-Mother Maacah, who was an addicted idolatress, as she made an image for the Asherah. Her influence was of course paramount. Nevertheless Asa became so zealous for the pure worship of Jahveh, that he removed his own mother from being queen (I Kings 15.13). How did it happen that in such surroundings, "his heart should have been whole with the Lord all his days" (ibid. 15.14)? Also in this case, his conversion was exclusively due to the influence of the priests, who by their close connection with the royal court were in a position to undermine the influence of the king's own mother. We see then that but for the priests who were able to mould the heart of the king in imbuing it with the religion of Jahveh during periods when it led a precarious existence, the prophets would not have had the least influence on the affairs of the government.

If we may use a simile, we would compare the prophets to professors at the higher institutions of learning and the priests to teachers in the elementary schools. The knowledge of the former is incomparably superior and more profound than that of the latter. Yet these higher institutions would be useless and not attended at all without the lower preparatory schools where the pupils receive the rudimentary knowledge which enables them to enter these higher institutions. One of the chief functions of the Levitical priests was the teaching of the Mosaic laws, as it is written: "They shall teach Jacob Thine ordinances, and

Israel Thy law" (Deut. 33.10). The prophet Micah, in his denunciations of all classes of the people, unwillingly testifies that the priests did not neglect this duty, but accuses them that they teach for hire (3.11). To be sure, the Mosaic law did not expect the priests to teach for hire. But this law provided also for their sustenance, in receiving tithes and other priestly emoluments. However, if the people at large partly consisted of Baal-worshippers, who had their own priests for whom they had to provide, and partly of those who were indifferent to Israel's religion and refused to give the priests the tithes prescribed by the law, many of the priests remained of course without any means of subsistence. It is thus quite natural that a good many priests should have founded private schools where the pupils had to pay for their instruction. Certainly, this was not an ideal condition. The priests, as we said, were no idealists, but practical men. They considered it more preferable to teach for hire than to do so gratuitously and perish of starvation. On this point also the prophet did not reckon with existing conditions, but insisted upon the realization of ideals.

It must be admitted that teaching for hire was bound to lead to the deplorable condition that the children of the poor did not get the benefit of the priestly instruction, and grew up in ignorance of the Mosaic laws and religious conceptions. That this was actually the case, we learn from Jeremiah who in his search for people who do justly and seek truth, looked first among the poor, believing to find the fear of the Lord and love of righteousness among the poor and oppressed. But his search was in vain: "Surely these are poor, they are foolish, for they know not the way of the Lord, and the ordinance of their God. I will get me unto the great men, and I will speak unto them; for they know the way of the Lord, and the ordinance of their God. But these had altogether broken the yoke and burst the bands" (5.4-5). We see then that the children of the

wealthy classes were well educated in matters of religion, while the poor grew up without religious instruction. The irreligious conduct of the latter was by the prophet attributed to their ignorance, and he considered it natural and excusable, but there was no excuse for the wealthy classes to turn their backs to the religious principles which they were taught in their youth. This shows plainly that the priests by no means neglected their duty as religious teachers, but, being without other means of subsistence, could impart instruction only to the children of the more affluent classes, who were able to pay for their labors. Micah was certainly right in denouncing such a state of affairs, due to which the people at large, consisting of the poorer classes, should grow up without religious knowledge, but it could not be ascribed to the mercenary greed of the priests, as they were victims of circumstances. No man sells his independence, if he can help it. Being dependent upon the recompense they received for their instruction, the priests lost thereby their independence. In their instruction, they had to be careful not to reflect upon present conditions, whether the conduct of the people conformed to the doctrines of Israel's religion which they taught. The worst offenders against these doctrines were of course the very people whose children they instructed, the wealthier classes. If one of them, carried away by his religious zeal, compared in his instruction the religious requirements with the actual conditions, he of course lost his pupils, his only means of subsistence, for the parents would not allow themselves to be exposed, in the eyes of their own children, as transgressors.

We may well assume that not a few of the priests lived in the houses of the rich as tutors, and were forced to close their eyes to all the wrongs and abominations they witnessed. They could not refuse to accept such positions. It was their duty to teach Israel's religion, wherever they had a chance, even in the house of the most corrupt people.

As long as they continued their religious activity, there was still a chance that the coming generation impressed with their teachings would change their ways, and would not follow the habits of their fathers. If, however, the priests had refused to enter the houses of the transgressors for the purpose of instructing their children, the hopeless condition of these families would have rested upon their own shoulders, as it is stated by Ezekiel: "When I say unto the wicked: Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood shall I require at thy hand" (3.18). Now it may be that the priests as a rule did not act in the capacity of preachers, publicly denouncing the people for their wrongdoing and threatening them with divine punishment. This would have been contrary to their policy. Their attitude was reconciliation and being on friendly terms with all classes of the people and of all shades of religious views and conduct. They followed the footsteps of their ancestor Aaron concerning whom the prophet Malachi said: "The law of truth was in his mouth, and unrighteousness was not found in his lips; he walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and did turn many away from iniquity" (2.6), and of whom the Rabbis said: "He loved peace and pursued peace, loving his fellow-creatures, and drawing them near to the Law." Preaching was the special function of the prophets for whom the absolute truth was the supreme law, and who cared nothing if thereby they aroused against themselves the hostility of the people. They acted according to the dictum of the exilic prophet: "There is no peace, saith the Lord, concerning the wicked" (Isaiah 48.22). However, the Rabbis declare: "A learned man is in no need of warning." The very instruction of the priests warned the pupils not to follow the wicked ways of their

fathers and surroundings. No exhortations and denunciations were necessary.

The prophets could easily avoid the communities of the hopelessly wicked, in pronouncing against them a prophecy of condemnation, and turning their backs upon them. They addressed themselves to the adult population, and there was no use of wasting their words on people who were deaf and blind to their exhortations. The priests, however, were chiefly the teachers of young children, and it would have been nothing short of a crime to leave them ignorant of the religious doctrines on account of the wickedness of their parents. On the contrary, for the sake of the children, it was their sacred duty to ingratiate themselves with the parents and to curry favor with them. If they had shown themselves intolerant toward them, the parents would never have permitted them to instruct their children, who would have lost the chance of becoming decent men and faithful toward their religion. In the same way they acted when they founded schools in their own homes. They had to walk circumspectly in not antagonizing the parents of their pupils. In their instruction they refrained from making allusions to the present conduct of the people. They restricted themselves to the instruction of Israel's tradition, and left it to the pupils, when advanced to the age of discretion, to draw their own conclusions, in contrasting the religious postulates with the prevailing conditions. If the priests had not given them this instruction, the activity of the prophets would not have had the least effect. The prophetic references to the past history of Israel, the moral principles and condemnations of the prophets would have sounded unintelligible and alien to the people at large. The priests laid the groundwork on which the prophets could build. They taught all religious subjects pertaining to morals, rituals, sacrifices, without drawing a line between those of lesser or greater importance. It was the function of the prophets

to stress the requirements that constituted the substance of Israel's religion. In comparison with the prophets, the priests were common laborers. But common labor is the fundament of civilization.

Nevertheless, the prophets did not appreciate the labors of the priests and treated them with contempt as hypocrites and time-servers in all their activities, both in the sanctuary and among the people. This unfavorable verdict of the prophets went down in history and is generally accepted. To be sure, the priestly religious activity, not being of an emotional nature, did not appeal to the prophets. With the priests, their whole conduct was a matter of policy. But the aim of this policy was the preservation of Israel's religion. To their religious activity we may apply the word of the Lord to Zerubabel: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the Lord" (Zechariah 4.6). When Elijah complained to the Lord that he had been very jealous in His service, and now they are seeking his life, he was told by the Lord: "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice" (I Kings 19.11-12). In the unemotional activity of the priests we may see this still small voice, which indicated the presence of the Lord. Now there was indeed one single instance when a priest of the sanctuary inflamed by the prophetic spirit disregarded the practical policy of the Levitical priests. It is narrated in the Book of Chronicles, that after the death of Jehoiada who placed Jehoash on the throne, this king and his princes turned away from the Lord: "And the spirit of the Lord clothed Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest; and he stood above the people and said unto

them: Thus saith the Lord God: Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the Lord, He hath forsaken you. And they conspired against him and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the Lord" (II Chronicles 24.20-21). Thus this priest, in deviating from the priestly policy, was martyred, and his death was of benefit to none.

It is likely that the conflict between the priests and the prophets had its starting point in the ninth century, after the accession of Jehoram. The Baal-worship introduced into Judah by this king owing to the influence of his wife Athaliah was, just as in North Israel, under the Omri-dynasty, the cause of moral corruption. The priests in accordance with their policy, did not refuse to accept the sacrifices of people who were morally and religiously corrupt. Men of this type, notwithstanding their immoral and irreligious character, were accounted worshippers of Jahveh. If they did not lose their standing among the Judeans, there was the danger that the people at large would follow their example. Under such conditions, the God of Israel could no longer be conceived as a Deity of a moral character, seeing that sacrifices and appearing before the Lord on the appointed seasons were sufficient to gain His favor. The prophets of this period of course held the priests of Jerusalem responsible for such a perversion of the Jahveh-religion. They taught that sacrifices of the wicked are abomination unto the Lord. This was no new conception. The prophet Samuel had already said to king Saul: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in hearkening to the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than fat of rams; for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and Teraphim" (I Sam. 15.22-23).

Nevertheless the people could not be persuaded to believe that men who have sinned against Jahveh should

not be permitted to offer sacrifices, as the act in itself was looked upon as an atonement for the sins and as a sign of repentance. They did not see any difference between the moral and ritual observances, considering them equally obligatory. From such a point of view, they may have argued that if a man committed moral transgressions, there was no reason for forcing upon him the commission of transgressions of a ritual nature. It seemed to them inconceivable that men morally corrupt should be forced to abandon the observance of all ritual commandments. Yet such a view was in the 8th century actually expressed by Isaiah, that the offering of sacrifices, the observance of Sabbath, New Moon, appointed seasons, and prayers of the wicked were an abomination unto the Lord (1.11-15).

This view expressed by Isaiah was the plain truth and could not be denied. Sacrifices and rituals were merely of a symbolic character, expressions of loyalty toward the Lord, and obedience to His commandments. Therefore these visible expressions of loyalty would be an abomination unto the Lord, if coming from men who were disloyal to Him and persistently disobeyed His commandments. We may rest assured that the priests did not deny this principle. But we have seen that they were the innocent victims of circumstances. If they had acted in agreement with this fundamental principle, at a time when the people at large practiced idolatry and were morally corrupt, it is questionable whether the worship of Jahveh would have survived. For the sake of the preservation of Jahveh's religion, they were forced to disregard this all-important principle. The Rabbis rightly said: "If it is time to work for the Lord, the law may be made void." As a matter of fact, this principle of the Rabbis was also acted upon by the prophets, in their denial that sacrifices and rituals constituted a part of Israel's religion. They were forced to utter such a view, contrary to all conceptions in antiquity with regard to religious worship, when they saw

that these external forms of worship had become with the people the sum and substance of their religion, and its ethical postulates, its fundamental principles, were not considered at all as religious requirements. This was indeed the only way out of the dilemma, in contending that sacrifices and rituals did not constitute divine commandments when the Lord adopted Israel as His chosen people in the wilderness; that the commandments on the basis of which the Lord concluded a covenant with Israel were purely of an ethical nature. This would of course show the inferior value of sacrifices compared with the moral commandments. They may have contended that sacrifices in Israel, as among other nations, were merely a matter of custom, the manner of paying homage to the Godhead, but were neither of an obligatory nature, nor should they be performed by men who were persistently breaking the commandments, on the basis of which the Lord had entered into a covenant with His people, and thereby proved themselves disloyal to Him. In their zeal for the preservation of the moral character of Israel's religion, they might have gone so far as to declare that the offering of sacrifices was not of Israelitish origin, but was a custom that Israel had adopted from the Canaanites after their entrance into Canaan.

Amos, the first of the literary prophets, indeed raised the question: "Did ye bring Me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?" (5.25). But did he expect a negative answer to his question? This would raise another question: When and where did the custom of sacrifices originate in Israel? Did he indeed assume that Israel adopted this custom from the native population of Canaan? Should he not have known that this custom dates from the dawn of history among all races and peoples, and that there was no people in antiquity without sacrifices and offerings, and Israel in the wilderness was certainly no exception? If this prophet was ac-

quainted with Israel's early traditions, he ought to have known that Jacob before his descent to Egypt offered sacrifices (Gen. 46.1). The erection of altars that tradition ascribes to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (ibid. 12.8; 13.18; 26.25; 35.7), was it not for the purpose of offering there sacrifices? If this was their manner of worship, is it likely that their descendants abandoned it? But tradition asserts distinctly that they did not abandon it. The starting point of the Exodus was the request to Pharaoh to let the people go and sacrifice to their God (Ex. 3.18; 5.3; 8.21, 23; 9.17; 10.25). If he expected a negative answer to this question, the conclusion would be obvious that neither this prophet nor the people to whom he addressed himself knew anything about these traditions. But even according to the modern critics, these traditions occur in the earliest biblical sources, dating from the 9th and 8th centuries, and they ought to have been known both to the prophet and his audience.

It has been explained that Amos did not mean to say that Israel was without sacrifices during the whole forty years of their sojourn in the wilderness, but he used a round number, to denote the time during which the people were sentenced to die in the wilderness, after the rebellion at Kadesh, which actually amounted to 38 years (Deut. 2.14), and the generation sentenced to die offered no more sacrifices. Others explain that they could not offer continuous sacrifices on account of lack of animals and meal. It has also been said that the prophet does not refer to the prescribed sacrifices but to freewill-offerings. Others again believe that the prophet means: Have ye offered to Me in the wilderness sacrifices only and not also true worship of the heart and the practice of righteousness? We might even connect this statement with the preceding verse: "Let justice well up as waters and righteousness as a perennial stream, which were the sacrifices and offerings ye have brought unto Me in the wilderness forty years."

However, all these interpretations are forced, and all exegetes have missed the real point of the prophet's statement. With the exception of the Passah-lamb, which was not a real sacrifice, none of the Festivals of the Seasons were intended to be celebrated in the wilderness, but after the entrance into Canaan. This is clearly stated (Ex. 12.25; 13.5; Lev. 23.10-21, 39, 42). Concerning the sacrifice of the Omer, it could not be observed in the wilderness, as is explicitly stated. With the Omer is closely connected the Festival of the Weeks.

Of the celebration of the Festival of Tabernacles it is said: "Ye shall dwell in tabernacles seven days; that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in tabernacles when I brought them out of the land of Egypt." If this Festival were a memorial of the time of their sojourn in the wilderness, it could not have been intended to be celebrated in the wilderness. The ordinance of the freewill-offerings opens with the words: "When ye come into the land of your habitations" (Num. 15.1-16). The same statement is also found in Deut. (12.11-27). Furthermore, the very fact that the ordinances for all the sacrifices during the whole year are placed by the biblical author of Numbers, chapters 28-29, shortly before Israel's entrance into Canaan, following the command of Joshua's appointment as the successor of Moses, leaves no room for doubt that, in the conception of the biblical author, these sacrificial ordinances were unknown to the generation which died in the wilderness, and were intended only for the time of their settlement in Canaan. If so, Amos was justified in asking whether there is any evidence in biblical traditions for a contention that Israel in the wilderness did offer sacrifices. Nevertheless the Lord took care of them during this period: "And I brought you up out of the land of Egypt, and led you forty years in the wilderness to possess the land of the Amorite" (2.10). Thus the presence and favor

of the Lord cannot depend upon the offering of numerous sacrifices, and how can you expect to secure His favor by the observance of rituals? Now from an archaeological point of view, it is not likely that the people in the wilderness did not offer sacrifices occasionally. But tradition took no notice of them. The dedication of the Tabernacle and the induction of the priests were of course performed with sacrifices. But it happened shortly after the Exodus, 39 years before Israel's entrance into Canaan, and Amos used a round number. It is also highly probable that the service in the Tabernacle during this period was not altogether without ceremonies, such as offering of incense, which we find in the rebellion of Korah (Num. 16.6, 18). The very fact that this ceremony was not accompanied by animal sacrifices or by meal offerings clearly bears out the prophet's contention that no sacrifices and meal-offerings were brought by Israel during their sojourn in the wilderness. Amos thus meant to say: Look up your historical records and find out whether you have brought in the wilderness sacrifices and meal-offerings. Thus there is not the least contradiction between the contention of Amos and the Mosaic ordinances with regard to sacrifices and rituals. This prophet knew the Mosaic Books better than his modern commentators who interpret his statement on the basis of the documentary hypothesis, declaring that the priestly ordinances of the Pentateuch were unknown to this prophet. He fully recognized the ritualistic precepts as a part of Israel's religious observances dating from the Mosaic period, but only as mnemonics to keep in the mind of Israel the Lord's covenant with them, conditioned on their obedience to the commandments of the Decalogue, which did not include sacrifices. He condemned the perverse conduct of his contemporaries who strictly adhered to observances of secondary import and cared nothing for the essence of their religion: Justice and Righteousness. But he would not have had the least objection to the

conduct of his contemporaries, if they had observed both the moral and ritualistic precepts, even if they had not drawn a line between them, in considering both of equal import.

Hosea, the younger contemporary of Amos, shared his view with regard to sacrifices. His activity fell during a period when Israel was steeped in immorality, of which he said: "The Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. Swearing and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery! They break all bounds, and blood toucheth blood" (4.1-2). When dire calamity had overtaken the land, and the people saw in it a retribution sent from the Lord for their faithlessness toward Him, and encouraged one another: "Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for He hath torn, and He will heal us, He hath smitten, and He will bind us up; After two days He will revive us, on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His presence" (6.1-2), it did not occur to their minds that their calamity was due to their moral offenses, but they tried to appease the Lord with the offering of sacrifices, as the prophet states: "With their flocks and their herds they go to seek the Lord, but they shall not find Him; He hath withdrawn Himself from them" (5.6). But he condemns such a repentance, comparing it with a morning cloud and the dew that early passeth away, for God desires mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God, rather than burnt-offerings (6.4-6). But he did not condemn the people for such a perverse view. He held the priests responsible for this condition, because in their teaching they stressed the importance of sacrifices, and did not emphasize the essence of Israel's religion, its moral requirements, as he said: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to Me; seeing thou hast forgotten the law of

thy God, I also will forget thy children" (4.6). If the priests, however, had done their duty, in teaching the people the fundamental moral precepts, the prophet would have had nothing to say against their priestly function of offering sacrifices.

Concerning the views of Isaiah, the younger contemporary of Hosea, with regard to sacrifices, it would seem that his vehement protest against the offering of sacrifices, observance of Sabbath and New Moon, of appointed Seasons, and even the prayers of the wicked, expresses a very low opinion of all external forms of worship. This is not so obvious from the part of his address that contains these denunciations (1.10-15), as from its conclusion which enumerates the positive demands of the Lord, saying: "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean, put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (1.16-17). But does this concluding part of Isaiah's address declare indeed that no external forms of worship are necessary for people who comply with these moral demands? If the observance of these rituals is forbidden to the wicked and unnecessary for the righteous, they would be useless altogether. But what did the prophet think of the priests who officiated at these rituals, and to whom this occupation was the means of subsistence? Was it not abominable on their part to draw their livelihood from the superstition of the people? Should they not be included in the condemnation of the evil-doers? Surely Isaiah was not favorably inclined toward the priests, blaming their intemperate habits: "The priest and the prophet reel through strong drink, they are confused because of wine, they stagger because of strong drink; they reel in vision, they totter in judgment" (28.7). The fact, however, that priest and prophet are mentioned together as equally guilty of intemperance proves the contrary, that the prophet condemned these two classes of

spiritual leaders for disgracing their offices. Moreover, there is positive evidence for the high esteem of Isaiah for the priestly calling, seeing that the High Priest Uriah was one of the "faithful witnesses" to sign the tablet upon which was written *Maher-shalal-hash-baz* (8.2). This priest was surely not the only one whom Isaiah regarded as a faithful servant of the Lord, and there must have been many others of the same type. If Isaiah had had a low opinion of the priests, Hezekiah would not have sent to him the elders of the priests to inquire an oracle of him on the occasion of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah (36.22).

Furthermore, if the rituals were looked upon in the eyes of Isaiah as being useless, no sanctity could be attached to the locality where these rituals were performed. In accordance with such a conception, the sanctuary of Jerusalem would have been the most useless house among all the buildings of Jerusalem. How can we understand that the sublime theophany of Isaiah, by which he was inducted into his prophetic office, should have taken place in this sanctuary? If sacrifices were a useless waste, the altar, on which these sacrifices were offered, would have been far from being sacred. But how did it happen that it was from this altar that the Seraph took a glowing stone or a coal and purified the prophet, by which his iniquity was taken away and his sin was expiated? If this was not the temple of Jerusalem but a heavenly temple, as some scholars explain, how could the prophet have imagined a heavenly counterpart of an earthly temple with an altar to which no sanctity could be attached? That the people at the time of this induction were thoroughly corrupt is obvious from the message of this theophany, and this people offered there sacrifices. Nor can we say that the prophet in the meantime had changed his opinion concerning the holiness of the sanctuary. In his exclamation: "When ye come to appear before Me, who hath required this at your hand, to trample My courts?" (1.12),

Isaiah still held fast to his opinion that the temple of Jerusalem was the seat of Jahveh.

Therefore, it is evident that Isaiah exclusively condemned the offering and the observance of the rituals by the wicked. But he was a statesman, and clearly perceived their import as symbols to keep in the minds of the people their close union with the Lord. It was equally due to his practical sense that he did not condemn the priests for accepting sacrifices from the wicked. He could easily put himself in their place and understood their motives. It was his prophetic duty to condemn the wicked for being brazen enough to appear before the Lord and bring their offerings. But he well knew that a refusal on the part of the priests to accept their offerings would have driven them away to the idolatrous sanctuaries, and they would have become even more wicked than before. According to II Chronicles 26.22, Isaiah was the author of a history of the reign of the king Uzziah. As an historian, he possessed the historical sense of considering times and circumstances, and clearly perceived that they were unfavorable to a materialization of the idealistic truths he proclaimed. And though he was not of the type of spiritual leader to compromise with existing conditions, he did not condemn other spiritual leaders who held a different view.

As to the position of Micah, the younger contemporary of Isaiah, with regard to sacrifices, we have already dwelt upon his condemnation of the priests for teaching Israel's religion for hire, and this is characteristic of his point of view. Though he modelled himself after his older contemporary, Isaiah, whose disciple he may have been, his outlook was that of a provincial character, his attitude was of one raised among primitive surroundings, who could not reconcile himself to the luxury and refinement of a large city, looking upon these features as degeneration and corruption, and condemning its inhabitants as immoral. If Isaiah had seen any wrong in teaching for hire,

we may rest assured that he would not have kept silent. But he had a proper understanding of the existing conditions in the capital, and Micah had not. If Micah accused the priests of mercenary motives, it stands to reason that he could not have had a high regard for the sacrifices offered by them. This is borne out by his address, in which he states the fundamental conceptions of Israel's religion:

“ ‘Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before Him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?’ It hath been told thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord doth require of thee: Only to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God” (6.6-8). It would thus seem that Micah actually considered all external forms of worship as superfluous, as long as man does justice, loves kindness, and walks humbly with God.

A more elaborate programme for righteous conduct, and likewise without any reference to external forms of worship, is given in Psalm 15, ascribed to David's authorship: “O Lord, who shall sojourn in Thy tabernacle? who shall dwell upon Thy holy mountain? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh truth in his heart; that hath no slander upon his tongue, nor doeth evil to his fellow, nor taketh up reproach against his neighbour; in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord; he sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not; he that putteth not out his money on interest, nor taketh a bribe against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.” Though David's authorship of this Psalm is out of consideration, as he would have been the last man to disregard the obligation of external forms of worship, its pre-exilic origin is well possible. Its author may have held views similar to those

of Micah. But how can we conceive the compilers of the Psalter to have been so senseless as to include such a Psalm in a work intended for the Temple-service, at a period when the whole Pentateuch was recognized as Mosaic, and none doubted the divine origin of sacrifices and rituals, if they had the least suspicion that its contents were contrary to the observances of the Jewish religion? If they did not find any contradiction between the contents of this Psalm and the Mosaic religion, may not the same hold true of Micah? Rituals and sacrifices are not the things that God requires of man, but are necessary for man to be a constant reminder of the union of God with Israel.

As a matter of fact, the prevailing opinion of modern critics denies Micah's authorship of this passage and regards it as post-exilic and some of them assign it to a very late post-exilic date. If so, it must be left out of consideration in the investigation of the position of the pre-exilic prophets toward sacrifices and rituals. However, if we accept the critical views, we know very little about the conceptions of this 8th century prophet, seeing that the largest portion of his Book is denied to be of his authorship. But we must bear in mind that the reasons for denying the integrity of the Book of Micah are for the most part purely arbitrary, from a preconceived point of view. Not taking into account subjective considerations and accepting the integrity of all the passages of his book as genuine utterances, we find there positive proof that this prophet was not opposed to sacrifices, if offered with clean hands and a contrite spirit. The Messianic message of chapter 4.1-4 predicts the future glory of the Temple of Jerusalem, that it shall become the center of a universal worship of Jahveh. This certainly demonstrates that Micah regarded this sanctuary as the most sacred place where the Lord resided. No matter what opinion we adopt concerning the authorship of this message, whether it was original with Micah or was taken over by him from his older contemporary,

Isaiah, in whose book it also occurs (Isaiah 2.1-4), or whether both of them quoted an older prophecy, one fact is certain, that this prophet believed in the sanctity of the Temple as the seat of Jahveh. But its only purpose was to offer there sacrifices. If, however, sacrifices and rituals were displeasing to Jahveh, this place would be far from being holy and unfit for a residence of the Lord. We see then that this prophet certainly approved of sacrifices as an act of worship and expression of loyalty toward the Lord. A place where He is worshipped wholeheartedly and in purity would naturally be sacred to Him. But this prophet maintained that it is not the offering of sacrifices that the Lord demands of man. One who is loyal toward the Lord in conducting himself according to the principles enunciated may express his loyalty outwardly by the offering of sacrifices, if he desires to give expression to his feelings. It would be a perverse conception of divine justice to contend that such an expression is displeasing to the God of Israel, though not being a divine requirement. But if one is disobedient to these postulates, such a man is disloyal toward God, and how can he express his loyalty by the offering of sacrifices? Such an act of worship would be hypocrisy and an abomination to the Lord. Thus the views of Micah on sacrifices may not have been different from those of Isaiah, if we approach the investigation from an objective point of view, free from any dogmatic bias.

Coming down to Jeremiah, we find that this prophet did not see in sacrifices an essential part of Israel's religion: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt-offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat ye flesh. For I spoke not to your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices; but this thing I commanded them, saying: Hearken unto My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people; and walk ye in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with

you" (7.21-23). This prophet addressed the people ironically: if they were eager to offer sacrifices, let them be the kind of offerings of which the flesh could be eaten at the sacrificial meal, and not burnt-offerings which are a waste altogether. Both are unnecessary, as the Lord never commanded them on the day when He made a covenant with Israel. This statement of Jeremiah constitutes a main argument against the pre-exilic origin of the detailed pentateuchal ordinances of sacrifices, seeing that this prophet knows no Mosaic sacrificial observances. This argument has been repeated again and again by all modern critics. However, would not this prophet have expressed the same opinion, even if the whole body of the sacrifices and rituals had been already codified during his period? Such a codification would have of course originated with the priests, his arch-enemies. Would he have hesitated to brand such a Code as a pseudepigraphy? If he knew nothing about the Priestly Code, he certainly knew the Book of the Covenant with its sacrificial precepts (Ex. 20.21, 22.27-29; 23.18; 34.19-20, 25), the Jahvistic narrative (Ex. 24.5), and the regulations of Deuteronomy (12.6, 11, 14, 27), concerning sacrifices. If he disregarded these documents, should he have treated with more reverence the Priestly Code?

However, from an historical point of view Jeremiah made a true statement. We have referred already to I Samuel 2.27-29, where we have unimpeachable evidence that Israel in Egypt had already a system of sacrifice as in later times, and that it did not originate in the Mosaic period. It was an ancient usage which Moses adopted and purified from conceptions which were contrary to Israel's religion. Maimonides, without knowing of this evidence, rightly explained in his *Guide of the Perplexed* that sacrifices and their regulations were not commandments in the very sense of the term but rather concessions. No people in antiquity could imagine divine worship without sacrifices. If Israel had not been permitted to offer sacrifices to the

Lord, they would have sooner or later lost all interest in this kind of religion. But considering that the heathen sacrifices were full of polytheistic conceptions and symbolism, special regulations by which Israel's sacrifices were purified from the former were necessary. The same is true also of the Festivals and other rituals, which brought the Israelites in closer connection with the Lord, and by which the bond between them was strengthened. Now what Jeremiah said was literally true. His very words in the name of the Lord: "Hearken unto My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people," paraphrase Ex. 19.5: "Now therefore, if ye will hearken unto My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be My chosen people from among all nations." Thus it is obvious that Jeremiah refers to the Decalogue, the Constitution of Israel, on the basis of which the Lord concluded a covenant with Israel, and there nothing is said about sacrifices. If so, the conclusion is plain: If Israel should observe the tenets of the Decalogue, they would be the chosen people of the Lord, even if they should not offer sacrifices. On the other hand, if they should offer sacrifices, and not observe the Decalogue, they would no longer be the Lord's chosen people. Thus it would be the height of folly to ignore the fundamental laws of Israel for those which were merely of a secondary nature, and this the prophet's contemporaries did. That Jeremiah actually referred to the covenant is further seen from the words: "And walk ye in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you." This is no doubt a quotation from Deut. 5.30: "Ye shall walk in all the way, which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you," and these words were said in connection with the Decalogue.

However, while Jeremiah did not see in the ordinances of sacrifices divine requirements in the very sense of the term, nor did he approve of the observance of sacrifices by

his contemporaries who were indifferent to the fundamental laws of Israel's religion, the question is still under consideration, whether principally he was opposed to the offering of sacrifices by the right kind of people. On the basis of several discourses of this prophet we may safely answer this question in the negative. First, we find there a discourse on Sabbath-observance, where he said: "If ye diligently hearken unto Me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, to do no work therein; then shall there enter in by the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David. . . . And they shall come from the cities of Judah . . . bringing burnt-offerings, and sacrifices, and meal-offerings, and frankincense, and bringing sacrifices of thanksgiving, unto the house of the Lord" (17.24-26). There is a prediction with regard to the restoration of Jerusalem, saying: "Thus saith the Lord: Yet again there shall be heard in this place . . . the voice of them that say: 'Give thanks unto the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good, for His mercy endureth forever,' even of them that bring offerings of thanksgiving into the house of the Lord" (33.10-11). Finally we have here a discourse that leaves not the least doubt on this subject: "There shall not be cut off unto David a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall there be cut off unto the priests the Levites a man before Me to offer burnt-offerings, and to burn meal-offerings, and to do sacrifices continually. . . . Thus saith the Lord, if ye can break My covenant with the day, and My covenant with the night so that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also My covenant be broken with David My servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers. As the hosts of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David My servant, and the Levites that minister unto Me"

(33.17-22). However, here again comes modern criticism and denies that we have in these passages genuine utterances of Jeremiah, assigning them to a post-exilic period. Yet there is no reason why Jeremiah should not have emphasized the high importance of Sabbath-observance. The critics cannot maintain that its ordinance was unknown to him, as it occurs already in the so-called *Jehovistic* document (Ex. 34.21), even if they should contend that he did not know the Decalogue of Ex. 20.1-14. Moreover, even if this prophet cared nothing for ritualistic observances, the commandment of Sabbath-observance, if rightly understood, is of a highly ethical nature, as it gives the slaves, the most wretched among the people, 52 days in the year during which they might enjoy a semblance of freedom, resting from their oppressive labors. As to the prophet's change of heart toward the priests, whose inveterate enemy he seems to have been, we must remember that after the first captivity he was for a brief period on friendly terms with the priests, especially with the chief priest Zephaniah, as seen from chapter 29.24-29, and this prophecy may be assigned to this period.

It is due to such preconceived points of view, that modern critics assign the Book of Joel to a post-exilic period. The main argument against numbering Joel among the pre-exilic prophets is the emphasis he placed upon the ritual services and on the importance of the regularity of sacrifices, in which he differs in a marked manner from the pre-exilic prophets. But this argument would be of no force whatever as soon as we assume that Joel himself was one of the officiating priests. To be sure, there are other arguments which seem to support the contention that Joel was a post-exilic prophet. It is pointed out that this prophet does not speak of a king, in connection with the calling of an assembly, and this might have been expected, if there had been a king in Jerusalem, during the event described. Nor does he mention North Israel, which would

be strange, if this kingdom had still existed at his time. It is further maintained that linguistically Joel is dependent upon Amos and other pre-exilic prophets. Furthermore, in chapter 4 Joel refers to the captivity of Jerusalem. Finally the reference to the plunder of the Temple in this chapter leaves no room for doubt that it dates from a period after the destruction of Jerusalem. For the solution of this problem, it has been suggested that the first two chapters belong to a pre-exilic prophet, and the last two chapters to a post-exilic prophet. However, there is not the least reason to impugn the integrity of the Book of Joel. The force of all these arguments may be freely admitted as soon as we assume that Joel was one of the younger contemporary prophets of Jeremiah, and like the latter survived the destruction of Jerusalem, so that in the first two chapters of his Book he deals with pre-exilic events; in the third chapter, perhaps with conditions during the siege of Jerusalem; and in the fourth chapter, with exilic events.

We believe that the drought and famine Joel describes in his Book occurred during the reign of Jehoiakim. From Jeremiah (22.13-19) we know that he was a thoroughly wicked king morally and religiously, and cared nothing for the worship of Jahveh. He was not present in the assembly called together for prayer and repentance. He would have ridiculed such proceedings. Thus the prophet had no reason to refer to him. When there was a fast in the fifth year of Jehoiakim, and the people were assembled in the temple, this king does not seem to have been present either (Jeremiah 36.22). On the other hand, the nobles and the elders present must have been God-fearing men, seeing that they saved Jeremiah's life. When Baruch read Jeremiah's roll of prophecies before them, they advised Jeremiah and Baruch to hide themselves, before they brought this roll to the king (*ibid.* 36.19). When the king cut this roll and cast it into the fire that was in the brazier,

there were some of the nobles courageous enough to remonstrate with him not to do it (*ibid.* 36.25). It is to these nobles that Joel addressed himself: "Hear this, ye elders" (1.2). It is natural that in the solemn address calling upon the audience to humble themselves before the Lord, and to pray for His mercy, the prophet should not have used the proud title "Nobles," but the primitive designation "Elders."

Being an officiating priest himself, Joel was naturally deeply concerned for the regularity of the sacrifices. In referring to the fact that "the meal-offering and the drink-offering is withholden from the house of God," the prophet strikingly demonstrated the condition of the country. In other times, whenever there was a famine, the priests would starve themselves rather than interrupt the regularity of the temple-service. Now, however, matters had come to such a pass, that the priests were deprived of all means to keep up the continuity of the offerings. Joel refers only to the interruption of meal- and drink-offerings, and not to the cessation of animal sacrifices. In this famine, there was no want of animals which would perish anyway by lack of water and pasture. Josephus vividly describes the determination of the priests to continue the daily sacrifices during the siege of Jerusalem by Pompey: "Although the city was taken, and the enemy fell upon them, and cut the throats of them that were in the temple, yet could not those that offered the sacrifices be compelled to run away, neither by the fear they were in of their own lives, nor by the number that were already slain, as thinking it better to suffer whatever came upon them, at their very altars, than to omit anything that their laws required of them." Now the very protests of the prophets against sacrifices evidently proves that there was nothing more important in the eyes of the people than sacrifices, and we can well understand the terror of the people at their interruption.

We have indeed absolute evidence that there was a

terrible famine during the period to which we assign Joel's prophetic activity. This famine was due to a drought which seems to have lasted for several seasons. This drought was evidently preceded or accompanied by a plague of locusts. The description: "The grains shrivel under their hoes; the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered" (Joel 1.17), refers indeed to a drought, and can have no connection with the plague of locusts. A drought causes more suffering than locusts. It was most probably the same drought which is so graphically depicted by Jeremiah. His description has the heading: "The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah concerning the droughts," and reads: "Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish, they bow down in black unto the ground; and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up. And the nobles send their lads for water; they come to the pits, and find no water; their vessels return empty; they are ashamed and confounded, and cover their heads. Because of the ground which is cracked, for there hath been no rain, in the land, the plowmen are ashamed, they cover their heads, etc." (Jer. 14.1-6). It is very likely that the fast proclaimed in the fifth year of Jehoiakim, to which we have already referred, was on account of this drought, and that it was on this occasion that Joel delivered his address.

It stands to reason that there was no love lost between Jeremiah, who declared sacrifices to be merely an ancient Israelitish usage and not divine ordinances of an obligatory character, and the priests of the temple of Jerusalem. Joel as an officiating priest naturally shared the sentiments of his brethren toward this prophet. On the other hand, Jeremiah branded the prophets who were the partisans of the priests as "false prophets," and scarcely made an exception in favor of Joel. This aversion toward one another was of old standing, and does not date from the time when Jeremiah predicted for the temple of Jerusalem the

fate of Shiloh, and the priests with their prophetic partisans wanted to put him to death (Jer. 26.1-24). According to the date of this event, it happened in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, thus five years before the proclamation of that fast. But this date is no doubt a scribal error. This is evident from the fact that in the trial of Jeremiah, a precedent was cited occurring during the reign of Jehoiakim, when this king put to death the prophet Uriah of Kiriath-jearim for having uttered a prophecy identical with that of Jeremiah (ibid. 26.20-23). Thus Jeremiah's trial happened several years later, after Jehoiakim's death: "At the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah." We may also rest assured that Jehoiakim would have executed Jeremiah without a trial, as he did to Uriah.

Jeremiah was not present in the assembly in the temple where Joel delivered his address, as he said to Baruch, whom he commanded to read his roll of prophecies to the people on the occasion of this fast: "I am detained, I cannot go into the house of the Lord" (ibid. 36.5-6). But it would seem strange that the prophet should have absented himself on a day of fast and repentance. We should think that there was no occasion more suitable for prophetic exhortations than in the midst of such an assembly called together for the purpose of prayer and repentance. Did the prophet not have the courage to address the people personally? We may suggest that he did not want to listen to Joel's address whom he regarded as a false prophet. But it is not likely that Jeremiah was idle on that day. He had his own assembly of disciples and partisans whom he addressed and exhorted. His wonderful address, consisting of a mixture of powerful prayers, exhortations, and denunciations, was probably delivered in this assembly. The very tenor of his discourse, changing from one mood to another, shows that he was torn in his mind, whether to pray for his people or keep silence (ibid. 14.7-15): "And the Lord said unto me: 'Pray not for this people for their good.

When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt-offering and meal-offering, I will not accept them' " (ibid. 14.11-12). There was no prophet so subjective and governed by his moods as Jeremiah (11.18-23; 12.1-6; 15.10-21; 17.15-18; 18.18-23; 20.7-18). As man and Judean, his heart bled for the calamity of his people, and he prayed again, notwithstanding the divine injunction (14.19-22). But he was told again by the Lord that his prayers would be of no avail: "Though Moses and Samuel stood before Me, yet My mind would not be toward this people; cast them out of My sight, and let them go forth" (ibid. 15.1).

We may compare the conclusion of Jeremiah's address with that of Joel. In the former, there is no ray of hope: the people must utterly perish. His pronouncement is awful, exceeding all bounds of mercy: "And it shall come to pass, when they say unto thee: Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them: Thus saith the Lord: Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for captivity, to captivity" (ibid. 15.2). What a striking contrast with the conclusion of Joel's address! There the Lord answers the prayer of the people: "Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith; and I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations" (Joel 2.19). The people left the assembly hopeful and did no longer despair, looking toward better times to come. But those who listened to Jeremiah's address went away broken-hearted and in utter despair. Therefore it is no surprise if Jeremiah was not a favorite with the people at large. Jeremiah may have actually referred to Joel, when he said in this discourse: "And I said: 'Ah Lord God! behold, the prophets say unto them: Ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine; but I will give you assured peace in the land.'"

Then the Lord said unto me: 'The prophets prophesy lies in My name' " (Jer. 14.13-14).

Now it is pointed out that Joel has no word of rebuke for his people; there is no rousing of their consciences by a sharp reminder of their sins, social, moral, or religious. This is in full agreement with our conception of the spiritual activity of the priests. In this assembly there were men, women, and children, starving and dying of hunger and thirst. Would it not have been the acme of cruelty to tell this people: It serves you right; you have fully deserved this fate, on account of your immoral and irreligious conduct? Is it the proper occasion to rebuke people for their transgressions when they are actually dying of hunger and thirst? Would it not have had the contrary effect of turning them away from Israel's religion? The priests were level-headed men, and were never carried away by their religious fervor, in embittering the minds of the people by severe strictures, and Joel was no exception. However, it is wrong to say that he has no rebuke for the people's misdeeds. In his address he plainly referred to their sins: "Yet even now, saith the Lord, turn unto Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with lamentation; and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; for He is gracious and compassionate, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy, and repenteth Him of the evil" (2.12-13). Is it not admirable, how Joel could call the people to repentance, and this exhortation was so kindly expressed that none of the hearers could feel hurt by it? Would it be surprising, if his admonition should have been more effective than the condemnation of Jeremiah?

The practical sense of this priestly prophet is so clearly expressed in the sentence: "Rend your heart, and not your garments." He declared thereby that it is not necessary for the people to show their repentance by the destruction

of their garments, exposing their bodies to suffer from heat and cold, as the Lord does not require that man should deprive himself of physical comforts, in order to prove his devotion to Him. Joel believed in the desirability of physical enjoyment, that man should not suffer discomforts for the sake of religion. He was a true representative of the priesthood that did not believe in asceticism or in isolating themselves from the common people and leading a solitary and contemplative life, but took part in the joys and sorrows of the people. The same rules of conduct were also those of the priestly prophets. It is natural that some of them, who were not strong-minded enough to resist temptation, were led astray and acquired habits incompatible with the conduct of ministers of the Lord. Yet they did not see any reason for changing their mode of life for the sake of a few weak individuals who disgraced their calling by drinking to excess, as Isaiah (28.7) accused them, and committing some other improper acts. The prophets as a rule lived indeed a solitary life of contemplation. But the priests as the teachers of the people had to associate with them, in pursuing their calling. Jeremiah, raised in a priestly surrounding, and being used to mingle with the people, could not accustom himself to his present isolation as a prophet, and bitterly complained: "I sat not in the assembly of them that make merry, nor rejoiced; I sat solitary because of Thy hand; for Thou hast filled me with indignation" (15.17). It is natural that if people wanted to enjoy themselves, they would not have invited to their festivities spiritual leaders of the type of Jeremiah, who might rebuke them for their extravagance, as did Amos (6.1-7), and predict for them a dire fate. It was different with the priests and the priestly prophets, who were "jolly good fellows," who did not disturb the festivities by sermons and denunciations, and the people gladly invited them to their festal gatherings.

It has been objected that Joel could not have been a

priest, because he did not include himself among the priests (1.13; 2.17). But we may just as well say that he personally did not pray to God, seeing that he did not include himself among those who should pray to Him. Now the excellency of Joel's style is generally recognized as clear, fluent and beautiful. It may be taken as granted that he was not the only one among the priestly prophets in command of a beautiful style. Being prophets of *salvation*, and not of *condemnation*, they were favorites with the people, who listened with pleasure to their beautiful discourses. We may rest assured that their speeches were well prepared, and some of them may have survived in a written form. They were modelled after the literary masterpieces of prophetic oratory. If one of them tried to imitate the style of Isaiah, he may have succeeded to such an extent that there was no criterion of style to doubt its genuine character. If we should rely only on a linguistic criterion, there would scarcely be any reason not to ascribe the whole Book of Isaiah to the pre-exilic prophet. Thus an exilic prophet actually fashioned his discourses after the example of Isaiah. May we not assume that some of his own contemporaries tried to do the same? There was nothing wrong about it, if a prophet who did not possess the genius of a poet attempted to borrow for the contents of his divine message the poetic language and the phraseology of predecessors or contemporaries. If the prophet was one of the followers of Amos, Isaiah, or Micah, and possessed the proper talent of imitation, there was nothing to distinguish his discourse from that of the prophet whose style he had adopted, provided that both have the same historical background. If the post-exilic compilers of the Canon found a prophecy without a superscription, they had to rely upon its style to find out its author. It may be that here and there they looked also for its historical background. But this is rather questionable. If they had done

so, they could never have ascribed the last 26 chapters of Isaiah to the pre-exilic prophet.

However, it matters little, from a religious point of view, whether a certain prophetic discourse was of Isaiah's authorship or of one of his followers who adopted his style, provided that it expresses the sentiments of this prophet and has the same historical background as Isaiah's writings. But the case would be decidedly different, if the prophet who imitated the style of Jeremiah, for instance, should have belonged to the priestly party. If we should rely upon the authority of Jeremiah, they were "false prophets" (23. 9-40). But from a purely historical point of view, the question is in order: Is there any criterion at all for judging the truth of prophetic predictions? This question is not of recent date, as it had been raised already during the Mosaic period, according to Deuteronomy 18.21-22, which reads: "And if thou say in thy heart: How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken; the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously, thou shalt not be afraid of him." But if we accept this criterion, that the fulfillment of a prophecy decides whether the prophet spoke the truth or not, the contemporaries of Jeremiah before the fall of Jerusalem had no means to judge whether Jeremiah or his opponents were God-inspired prophets or not. Jeremiah himself, in his controversy with the prophet Hananiah, who prophesied that within two years the vessels of the house of the Lord will be brought back along with the king Jeconiah and the captives of Judah, and that the yoke of the king of Babylon will be broken, laid down a rule by which true prophecy may be judged: "The prophet that prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him" (28.1-17). Hananiah was of course one of the

priestly prophets, who delivered his oracle in the temple, in the presence of the priests and of all the people. Thus the non-fulfillment of his prophecy proved him to be a false prophet.

However, is this a real test by which a correct judgment of true prophecy may be formed? Is it not true, that prophecy is purely of a conditional nature? This doctrine is pronounced by Jeremiah himself, who said in the name of the Lord: "At one instant I may speak concerning of a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up and to break down and to destroy it; but if that nation turn from their evil, because of which I have spoken against it, I repent of the evil that I thought to do unto it. And at one instant I may speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; but if it do evil in My sight, that it hearken not to My voice, then I repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit it" (18.7-10). By the same token, how could Jeremiah's contemporaries see in the non-fulfillment of Hananiah's prediction a sure proof that he had not spoken in the name of the Lord, as it might be attributed to the evil conduct of the people? Moreover, there are some predictions of Jeremiah himself which were never fulfilled, as those against Egypt, that it will be conquered by Nebuchadnezzar (44.30; 46.1-26), against Babylon (50-51.58), and against Elam (49.35-39). It is due to the fundamental doctrine with regard to the conditional nature of prophecy that we may number Ezekiel and the Second Isaiah among the true prophets of Israel, though of their predictions concerning the future glory of Israel, after the captivity, scarcely a minimum became true. These prophets in promising Israel such a glorious future expected the returning captives to become "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" in the very sense of the term. These expectations were far from being realized, as we know, and what right had he to expect the fulfillment of prophecies promised them conditionally?

They complied only with a minimum of the prophetic demands and, in the same way, only a minimum of the divine promises were fulfilled.

Thus there is no rule by which "true prophecy" can be distinguished from "false prophecy," if both prophets spoke in the name of Jahveh and both demanded obedience to His commands. They differed only theologically. While Jeremiah and prophets of his type stressed the moral conceptions, and disregarded sacrifices and rituals as mere customs, the priestly prophets demanded the observance of both morals and rituals as divine commandments. On this point their teachings were in every respect identical with those of Ezekiel and the post-exilic prophets who held the same conceptions. This fundamental difference accounts for the fact that the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel, though being contemporaries, completely ignored one another. If Ezekiel's activity had been in Judah, Jeremiah would have included him among the "false prophets," and the latter would have returned the compliment. Now Ezekiel's doctrine of Individual Responsibility (18.1-28) is identical with that of Jeremiah (31.29-30). The latter expressed this doctrine in two verses, while Ezekiel devoted to it a full chapter. This may perhaps prove Ezekiel's dependence upon Jeremiah. The former interpreted and elaborated it into a full discourse. Who knows whether other contemporaries of his belonging to the priestly prophets did not do the same? As a matter of fact, Jeremiah charged the so-called "false prophets" that they were stealing his prophecies, saying: "Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal My words, every one from his neighbour" (23.30). But it stands to reason, that they did not steal his denunciations and condemnations, as they had no use for them in their prophetic activity. He could have had no objection, if they had done so, as in his discourse on False Prophets, he exclaimed: "If they have stood in My council, then let them cause

My people to hear My words, and turn them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings" (23.22). They appropriated only those prophecies that they could use in their discourses. They imitated also their form and style. As for instance, Hananiah's prophecy is worded like that of Jeremiah (27.19-22), but in a contrary sense. There may have been other priestly prophets who in their discourses adopted his style and form. If some of them survived, would not the post-exilic compilers of the Canon have assigned them to Jeremiah's authorship judging by their form and style? From such a point of view, there is no need for modern critics to assign the discourse on Sabbath-observance and sacrifices, which they hold not to be in the spirit of Jeremiah, to a post-exilic period. They may be safely ascribed to the authorship of the priestly prophets who wrote in the form and style of Jeremiah, as it will be readily admitted that for them sacrifices and rituals were of the utmost importance. We may further assume that eschatology played a great part in their discourses. Their utterances were full of hope and comfort. If the present was gloomy, the condition desperate, and they could not promise relief, they spoke of the future glory of Israel. The modern critics assign the eschatological prophecies found in Amos, Isaiah, Micah to post-exilic authors. Such a view would brand the post-exilic compilers as forgers who ascribed these matters to pre-exilic prophets. But it would be quite different, if they originated with the priestly prophets who wrote in the style and form of Amos, Isaiah, Micah. Judging by their style, the compilers did not doubt their genuine character. The writings of the prophetic books would not lose the least value, whether they belonged to the prophets whose names they bear, or to the pre-exilic priestly prophets. Let us bear in mind that their conceptions were identical with those found in the Pentateuch.

CHAPTER III

The conception of piety and religious devotion in antiquity—Moral conduct as the consequence of religious observances—Demands beyond human power—An excessive number of rituals—The symbolic character of rituals—A perfect state of human society—The fear of punishment—The principle "Fear of the Lord"—Its rare occurrence in the prophetic literature—"The Knowledge of the Lord"—The investigation of its meaning—Hosea's "Knowledge of the Lord"—The covenant as connubial relationship—*Hesed* and *Emeth*—Ideal Israel—The Remnant—Isaiah's "Knowledge of the Lord"—The covenant as filial relationship—The rebellion against a natural law—The Messianic attribute—The misinterpretation of the Messianic prophecy—Jeremiah's "Knowledge of the Lord"—The term *Emūnah*—Habakkuk's principle of *Emūnah*—The definition of this term—Jeremiah's disappointment—His doctrine of individual responsibility—Israel divorced—Their claim of filial relationship—The difference between Hosea and Jeremiah—Belief and Knowledge—Jeremiah's own definition of "the Knowledge of the Lord"—"The Knowledge of the Lord" gained by human experience—Faith in the ancestors—The fifth commandment—Propagation of national creeds among other nations—The testimony of written documents—The ethical value of knowledge gained by experience—The short-lived nature of Israel's faith—Israel's faith in the Lord compared with that of Abraham—The faith on evidence of a cumulative nature—The religious conceptions of Love and Fear—The ephemeral nature of empiric knowledge—The want of faith—Israel's faith in the non-Israelitish creeds—Israel's claim to the property of their ancestors—The guilt of the corrupt worshippers of Jahveh compared with that of the apostates—The firm belief in Jahveh's power—Superstition—The prophets challenged to verify their predictions—The fundamental import of the conditional nature of prophecy—The plea of repentance—Isaiah's induction into the prophetic office—The obscure contents of his message—The New Testament interpretation—Isaiah's activity out of harmony with his induction—The doom of Northern Israel—No justification for a message of doom—The survival of Israel—The holy seed—Jahveh's righteous anger—The part of a seducer.

AMONG all creeds in antiquity, as well as later, piety and religious devotion were measured by the regular observance of matters of a purely religious nature, as attendance at the divine service, the performance of rituals, the fer-

vor of the prayers, and support of the sanctuaries and of their attendants. The conduct of a righteous life, in dealing with his fellowman, mercy toward the poor and oppressed, were merely regarded as the outcome of religious devotion. On the other hand, one who led a righteous life and was just and charitable toward his fellowmen, without caring for religious observances, was looked upon as a good-natured fellow, but none would have associated his name with religion and piety. His conduct was not attributed to his reverence of the deity, which imposed it upon him, but to his easy-going nature, that could not stand wronging a fellowman; he liked to see around him happy and contented faces and, by not doing them any harm but by helping them, would live in a pleasant and cheerful atmosphere. Such a man would have freely confessed that religion was far from his mind in conducting himself in that way, that fear of the Deity had not the least influence on his actions. On the contrary, he would have taken it as an insult, if one should have numbered him among the religious people, which would mean that he is not master of his actions, but is controlled by the fear of the deity. People of that type have existed among all nations and all times, but were exceptions.

Now if religious devotion is judged by the conduct of a moral life, such men were in no need of religion. If man would be constituted in that way, religion could be dispensed with altogether. But religion is like a medicine which is needed for diseased natures whose dispositions are not of that easy-going type, in order that it should subdue and eradicate the germs of selfishness and wickedness, which are inherent to the physical nature of the average person. Without it man would surely follow the line of least resistance in dealing with his fellowmen, and would disregard their welfare altogether, if it should serve his own selfish ends. Moreover, even the few who should possess an easy-going nature, and without religion were

inclined to lead a righteous life, would be taken advantage of by people who are of a different disposition. Therefore such a man is totally wrong in thinking that he is in no need of religion. He is even in greater need of it than differently constituted characters, as they can defend themselves against evil-doers who wrong them, while he is helpless on account of his mild-tempered disposition. He needs religion, not for himself, but for his surroundings. Otherwise he could not follow his own line of least resistance, in acting toward them in accordance with his natural disposition and leading thereby a righteous life.

The same was true of Israel, in the conceptions of the priests and their prophetic partisans. They considered morality the consequence of a religious life, consisting of the performance of rituals, offering sacrifices, giving tithes to the priests and the poor, and attending the services in the sanctuary. They also held that the aim of all these observances was the conduct of a moral life. It was also their religious conception that morality is the purpose of religion, and that this is the thing that God requires of man. But without being constantly reminded of God, man is prone to forget His existence altogether, due to the imperfections of his nature. There were men in Jerusalem in the days of the prophet Zephaniah: "Who said in their heart: 'The Lord can neither do good, nor can He do evil'" (1.12). If there is nothing external that should keep in the mind of man his dependence upon God, is it likely that he would nevertheless: "walk humbly before God"? Certainly, we should carry God in our hearts and not on our lips. The heart would be the proper dwelling-place for the Godhead, provided that we could keep it free from other impure thoughts constantly intruding into it. But can we control our thoughts? Is it not written: "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Gen. 8.21)? The Psalmist rightly understood that the human heart is unfit for such a purpose, and therefore prayed: "Create

for me a pure heart, O God!" (Ps. 51.12). Does it not seem that the postulate of Micah "to walk humbly before God," without any external form of worship, demanded a conduct beyond human power? On the other hand, if man aims to show his devotion toward God by outward forms of worship, does he not prove thereby that he "continually set the Lord before him" (Ps. 16.8), notwithstanding that his heart is constantly beset by its inherent evil thoughts? If a man's life is encompassed within a set of ceremonial formulae and regulations, the only purpose of which is to keep within his thoughts his dependence upon God in all the affairs of his labors, can we imagine that such a man would disregard the divine commandments concerning his conduct with his fellowmen and be morally corrupt? The very fact, that he does not burst these bands by which he is encircled, and which he could easily do, if he should follow the evil inclinations of his heart, testifies that he is fully aware of their need to force him into the path of righteousness, lest he be led astray by the corruption inherent to his nature. May we not say of such a man, who is fully aware of his limitations, that without being continually reminded of his obligations toward the Lord by external forms of worship, he would give vent to his wicked thoughts, that: "He is walking humbly before God"?

Surely one might object and maintain that the performance of an excessive number of rituals is liable to assume such an import in the mind of the people, that its final aim, the conduct of a moral life, would be totally obscured, and what is merely of a symbolic character would become the sum and substance of religion. But the time and labor spent in their performance is certainly no reason for dispensing with them. If we may use a homely simile, we might just as well say that the acquisition and preparation of food require more labor and time than its consumption. Yet the acquisition and preparation of food is not the real

aim of these labors. Should not the same hold true of those rituals which aim to mould the mind of their performers, that it should always be directed toward God and the observance of His commandments, and thus are of a preparatory nature? Is it a waste of time and labor, if man should be continually occupied with these matters? If after all his labors, he should disregard the moral laws, he would act just as senselessly as one who destroys his food and does not use it for his sustenance, after spending months in ploughing, sowing, reaping, threshing, winnowing, and storing it in his barn.

However, one might still object that owing to the continual observance of ritualistic performances, their symbolic character would be forgotten and they will be regarded as being of the same importance as that of the moral laws. The modern critics assert, indeed, that the Priestly Code does not draw any difference between the observance of moral laws or those of ritualistic character. For the sake of argument, let us concede the truth of this objection. But would the conduct of a moral life lose anything of its value, if man should perform with the same exactitude and punctuality observances of an inferior nature, and consider both rituals and morals as being of equal importance? Certainly not! This was indeed the conception of the Rabbis who taught: "Be heedful of a light precept as of a grave one." If one follows the line of least resistance, he would not encumber himself with a load of ritual observances, to lose in the end everything, in disregarding commandments of a moral character, which in his mind are at least of the same import and obligation as those of a ritual nature. In all affairs of human life, in labors, professions, arts and sciences, one expects exactitude and perfection in the most minute details, and high admiration is expressed, if the products come up to this expectation and are perfect even in matters of the least importance. Why should religious acts be judged differently?

Now we have demonstrated that the conduct of a moral life, without external forms of worship, is for the average man nigh impossible. It would require an extremely kind disposition, a firmness of mind, and congenial surroundings. Without these three conditions, such a perfect state of human society could never be realized. Kind and just people would become helpless victims of fellowmen differently constituted, as is usually the case. On the other hand, external acts of devotion toward God would unceasingly remind people of their duties and responsibilities in all affairs of their life, including conduct toward their fellowmen, and force them against the evil inclinations of their heart, inherent to its nature, to walk the straight path of the righteous. This may not be an ideal condition, that man's actions should be the result of fear of God and against their own inclinations, that "Damocles' sword," as it were, should be the only incentive to keep man on the straight path. But fear of punishment is the basis of all human constitutions at all times and among all nations. The Rabbis rightly said: "Pray for the welfare of the government, since but for the fear thereof men would swallow each other alive." The penalties imposed on the transgressors, in the civil codes of all nations, would be unnecessary, if the lawgivers should have expected the people to obey the laws of their countries spontaneously, as a patriotic duty, without impulsion. Man has learned by experience that obedience to the law can be enforced only by fear. And for the same reason the Mosaic Law also imposed penalties on the transgressors of its laws.

Nevertheless it must be readily admitted that this is not an ideal state of affairs, that fear of punishment should be the only reason for worshipping God and obeying His commandments. The Rabbis indeed deprecated the religious conduct of one who worshipped God out of fear, and considered one who worshipped God out of love of a superior rank. There is good reason for the assumption

that the Decalogue in its original form did not contain any threats of punishment. Israel was expected to observe its laws voluntarily, in accordance with the expectation that they would become "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex. 19.6). But the Lawgiver soon perceived that such an expectation was far from being materialized, and that laws can be enforced only by means of threats and penalties. The priests and the priestly prophets being practical men, as has been said, experience was their leading principle in all their spiritual activities, and they fully appreciated the effective force of fear. Their aim was to put the fear of God in the heart of the people. In emphasizing the importance of rituals, and the penalties imposed upon their omission, there was scarcely any chance that the fear of God would be forgotten by their observers. May we not say of a man, in whose heart the fear of God is implanted, and who always fears a divine punishment for omitting the observance of the rituals, that "he walks humbly with God"?

Now the term "Fear of the Lord" occurs everywhere almost innumerable times in the exilic and post-exilic literature, and is regarded as the fundamental principle of religion. It is also frequently found in the Pentateuch and the historical books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles. But with regard to the occurrence of this term in the pre-exilic prophetic literature, it occurs only in the Book of Isaiah 11. 2-3 and 33.6. However, the pre-exilic origin of both these chapters is partly questioned and partly denied by not a few modern commentators. Even if chapter 11 should be ascribed to Isaiah, as some scholars concede, there is some doubt whether the text, in which the term "Fear of the Lord" is found, was correctly transmitted. Be it as it may, there cannot be any doubt, that Isaiah did not pronounce "Fear of the Lord" as a religious postulate. Otherwise we would find it frequently in his discourses. There is only one passage in which the prophet

advised the people not to fear the invading enemy but the Lord (8.12-13). But this does not prove that "Fear of the Lord" was one of his religious principles. This passage means: If the Judeans join the Syro-Ephraimitic allies out of fear, they would have reason to fear the Lord, who would punish them for it. Nor is there any reference to the "Fear of the Lord" in the Book of Amos, though one might see some allusion to such an idea in the words: "The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" (Amos 3.8). But here the prophet refers to himself: having heard the message of the Lord that the day of judgment for Israel is approaching, he was bound to proclaim it. The same holds true of the prophet Hosea, though he puts in the mouth of the people the words: "We have no king; for we feared not the Lord; and the king, what can he do for us?" (10.3). Yet he nowhere exhorts the people to fear the Lord, nor does he include in his charges (4.1-2) the lack of the "Fear of God" in the land. In Micah we find a reference to the "Fear of the Lord," in the passage: "They shall come with fear unto the Lord our God, and shall be afraid because of Thee" (7.17). But these words refer to the heathen nations that wronged Israel. We may also mention that Micah's authorship of this section (7.14-20) is generally denied by modern scholars.

Coming down to Zephaniah, this prophet distinctly proclaims "Fear of the Lord" as a religious principle, in the exhortation: "And I said: 'Surely thou wilt fear Me, thou wilt receive correction'" (3.7). There would be nothing strange, if this prophet should have laid special emphasis on the "Fear of the Lord" as a religious principle. The same view was apparently held by his younger contemporary, Jeremiah. There are several utterances in which Jeremiah reproaches the people for not fearing the Lord. So in chapter 5.22, he exclaims: "Fear ye not Me? saith the Lord, will ye not tremble in My presence?" He

continues in the same discourse (5.23-24): "But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. Neither say they in their heart: Let us now fear the Lord our God." There is another prophetic utterance in which the prophet says: "And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me for ever; for the good of them and of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; and I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me" (32.39-40). However, the section in which this passage occurs is generally denied to Jeremiah's authorship by modern scholars, in regarding it a post-exilic interpolation. So also section 5.18-31, where the former quotations referring to the "Fear of the Lord" occur, is impugned by a number of critics. If we accept their views, Jeremiah, like his predecessors Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah, did not proclaim "Fear of the Lord" as a fundamental doctrine of the Jahveh-worship. Nor is this religious principle found in Ezekiel.

Now there can be no doubt that in post-exilic times, "the Fear of the Lord" or "the Fear of God" was regarded as the highest religious principle; that a perfectly pious person was designated "God-fearing" or "one who fears the Lord." But the same is true of pre-exilic times. None would assign Abraham's words: "For I thought: Surely the fear of God is not in this place" (Gen. 20.11), to a post-exilic period. Nor would one regard Joseph's declaration: "I fear God" (ibid. 42.18), as a post-exilic religious conception, projected into the past. Of less force or of no force at all would be the evidence for the existence of this religious principle during pre-exilic times from the sections assigned by the critics to the Priestly Code, and the Historical Books. The critics from their own point of view could certainly maintain that this religious conception found in them may date from exilic and post-exilic

periods. This might even be contended with regard to Deuteronomy, where "Fear of the Lord" is so often emphasized. Though in former years the pre-exilic composition of Deuteronomy was generally conceded, at least as far as that of chapters 12-26, in recent years its pre-exilic date was emphatically denied by some critics, and assigned to about 500 B.C.E.

However, it is scarcely conceivable that any scholar would seriously assert that this religious conception was not generally known during the pre-exilic periods, even if it could not be proved from the pre-exilic literature. Surely this was not a specific Israelitish conception, but was shared by all creeds of antiquity. The cuneiform term *palāhu* "to fear," with reference to the gods, occurs innumerable times in the cuneiform literature, so that the very term *palhu* "fearing" is used in the sense of "God-fearing." If so, does it not seem strange that this religious conception should so rarely be found in the prophetic exhortations? Hosea accuses Israel that "there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land" (4.1). Why does he not refer to the lack of the "Fear of the Lord"? He says or puts the words in the mouth of the people: "Let us strive eagerly to know the Lord" (6.3), and says nothing about the "Fear of the Lord." Isaiah likewise charges Israel with the sin of not knowing the Lord: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know *Me*" (1.3). According to this prophet, one of the attributes of the Messiah is the possession of "the spirit of knowledge (and of the fear) of the Lord" (11.2), provided that this Messianic prediction is of Isaiah's authorship. Jeremiah also charges the people with the same sin of not knowing the Lord, and refusing to know Him (9.2,5).

This discussion leads us to another inquiry. What is the meaning of "Knowledge of the Lord" or of "Knowing the Lord"? It certainly cannot mean "to be aware of the

Lord's existence"? Is it conceivable that the existence of Jahveh was unknown to the Israelites of those periods? We might perhaps suggest that the people had an erroneous conception concerning the nature of the God of Israel, in believing that He could be worshipped like any other god, with the offering of sacrifices, performance of rituals, and that He is not concerned in the moral conduct of His votaries; or if He does concern Himself in matters of morality, they can be atoned for with the offering of sacrifices. Thus they did not know what Israel's God demands of man, as Micah expressed himself. We have seen that this was indeed the conception of the people at large, and that the prophets protested against it. But if the people's transgressions were exclusively due to their ignorance of the demands of the Lord, they ought not to have been condemned so severely by the prophets. Though ignorance may not be a real plea to be acquitted altogether, the transgressor ought not to be treated as a criminal who breaks the law presumptuously. Or does it mean that the people willingly refused to accept the prophetic teachings of Israel's religion that were contrary to their own religious conceptions? Jeremiah said indeed: "Through deceit they refuse to know Me, saith the Lord" (9.5). This may perhaps mean: They pretended to be zealous for the honor of Jahveh, in refusing to accept teachings from spiritual leaders who deprecated the divine ordinances of sacrifices and rituals, and turned their backs to all their exhortations. But Jeremiah himself testified that the wicked people of his period possessed such a knowledge, and nevertheless it had not the least influence on their conduct: "I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them; for they know the way of the Lord, and the ordinance of their God. But these had altogether broken the yoke and burst the bands" (5.5). He obviously intended to justify himself in the eyes of the learned men in demonstrating that his teachings with regard to the

inferiority of ritualistic observances, in comparison with a righteous conduct of life, are fully in agreement with the Mosaic Law. Thus the possession of the "Knowledge of the Lord" was not a cure for the social ills which the prophets ascribed to the lack of it.

If so, does it not seem that "not to know the Lord" implies something more than to be ignorant of His laws? The term *yāda* "to know" is applied to the most intimate connubial relations. The prophet Hosea, who was the first to use the expression "the Knowledge of God," presents the covenant between the Lord and Israel as a connubial relationship (1-3). In making this comparison so graphically described in detail, the prophet expresses the doctrine that also in the relationship between the Lord and Israel there must be the love, passion, common interests and constant faithfulness expected in such a connubial state. The prophet in depicting the future marriage relation between the Lord and Israel, says: "And I will betroth thee unto Me for ever; and I will betroth thee unto Me, in righteousness, and in justice, and in lovingkindness, and in compassion; and I will betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord" (2.21-22). It is seen that the "Knowledge of the Lord" is the final result of a connubial relationship, based on righteousness, justice, lovingkindness, compassion, and faithfulness. This is not a conventional marriage in which husband and wife fulfill their obligations toward each other, in accordance with the marriage-contract. This is a marriage founded on love and devotion deeply implanted in their hearts and souls. In such a human marriage, if one should pass away, the husband's or the wife's place could never be filled by a substitute. So also the connubial state between the Lord and Israel will endure forever. A heart of that nature filled with love and devotion cannot but be free from all evil inclinations, and cannot be intruded by impure thoughts and desires. The righteous deeds of people of

that type are not the effect of the expectation of rewards. Nor are the omission of unjust acts by them due to a fear of punishment. The possessor of such a heart is incapable of doing evil.

Now if this is the correct interpretation of the "Knowledge of the Lord," it is certainly incompatible with the "Fear of the Lord." If so, how can Isaiah ascribe to the Messiah both qualities: "The Knowledge of the Lord and the Fear of the Lord"? We would expect the Messiah to possess the sublime quality of "the Knowledge of the Lord," but not the inferior quality of "the Fear of the Lord" and the possession of both together would be contradictory. On this ground alone, if not also for linguistic reasons, we may see there a textual corruption. Hosea's idealistic conception of the relationship between the Lord and Israel was not a new doctrine by any means. Israel was expected to live up to such an ideal, in becoming "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." But this ideal was never realized, not during the Mosaic period and far less later. This prophet was fully aware of the fact that there was no man in Israel who possessed the "Knowledge of God." There were of course some God-fearing men in the country, though of a limited number. But none came up to his specifications of a truly righteous man, representing ideal Israel in their relationship to the Lord. He disregarded those who served God out of fear. Now the Rabbis defined a *Hāsīd* as one who in all righteous deeds goes beyond the Law and does more than God requires of him. Of such a man we may truly say that he approaches the prophetic ideal of one possessing the "Knowledge of God." The acts of such a man may be designated as *Hesed*. Where men of this type are wanting, there is no *Hesed*. The religion of those who served the Lord out of fear he could not recognize as perfect *Truth*. Therefore Hosea said: "There is no *Hesed*, nor *Emeth*, nor Knowledge of God in the land." The latter is the fountain-

head of the highest virtues, and only among its possessors are found *Hesed* and *Emeth*.

The prophet in his discourse addressed himself to two classes of the people of Israel: the pious and the impious. He did not approve of the former either, and of them he said: There is no *Hesed*, nor *Emeth*, nor Knowledge of God among them. If they had been men of a truly ideal type, the people would not have sunk so low. The impious class, however, he charged with the most horrible crimes: Swearing and lying, killing and stealing, committing adultery and breaking all bounds, so that blood toucheth blood. But though Hosea did not find among the pious people in Israel men who possessed the "Knowledge of God," he did not look upon its achievement as impossible, as being out of reach of human strength. He exhorted his audience not to slacken in their endeavor. We may rest assured that the people who said: "We shall surely know, if we strive zealously to know the Lord" (6.3) were God-fearing men whom Hosea held responsible for the deterioration of the people, because they themselves did not have the proper kind of religion. They tried to follow the prophet's teachings. But it seems that they did not succeed, and the prophet exclaims in despair: "What shall I do unto thee, O Ephraim? seeing that your *Hesed* is as the morning cloud, and as the dew that early passeth away" (6.4). They were not to blame from a human point of view. We have said that men of such a high type can exist only in a congenial surrounding. But they had to deal with men to whom nothing was sacred, perjurers and thieves, murderers and adulterers, in a country where anarchy reigned supreme, as described by Hosea. But he, like the other prophets, never compromised, and was never satisfied with a minimum success; he demanded of these pious men that they should strive to reach the highest ideal. They were not different from those of Judah, whom Hosea included in his denunciations (6.4), in being God-fearing men

who combined piety with external forms of worship, and Hosea told them in the name of the Lord: "I desire *Hesed*, and not sacrifice, and the Knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings" (6.6).

However, it may be that the prophet himself was not sure whether this goal would ever be attainable under present conditions, and nevertheless insisted upon striving after it to approach it as near as possible. The very fact that the crowning result of the future state, when the Lord would betroth Israel to Himself forever, would be that Israel shall know the Lord, clearly indicates that he did not expect his own generation, even those who willingly accepted his teachings and were eager to comply with his demands, to reach and attain such a condition of perfection. With regard to the people at large, he utterly despaired of their correction declaring: "Their deeds will not suffer them to return unto their God; for the spirit of harlotry is within them, and they know not the Lord" (5.4). However, the conclusion of this passage makes it questionable whether it refers to those who were utterly corrupt, as "the Knowledge of the Lord," in the sense of our interpretation, could not be expected among them. It may be that it refers to both classes, and the prophet charges one with their evil deeds, and the other with the lack of "the Knowledge of the Lord." By "the spirit of harlotry," the prophet may mean the evil inclinations lurking in their hearts, which are momentarily subdued by the "Fear of the Lord," but are still there and may at any time free themselves and result in evil deeds; and they can be annihilated only by the "Knowledge of the Lord," by which the heart is purified.

Hosea's doctrine was hard enough to comply with for people who were religiously inclined, and whose conduct of life was on the whole satisfactory, according to circumstances and surroundings. But it was absolutely ineffective for people who were religiously and morally corrupt. The

prophet did not try to reach them by imbuing them with the "Fear of the Lord" which might have inspired terror into their hearts, by which their conduct of life might have been improved. He had no remedy for the people at large. He refused to teach a doctrine of this inferior quality, though it might have been more effective in such desperate cases. He was not satisfied with improving conditions, but demanded that the people must return to the Lord with all their hearts and all their souls. On this point his position was fully in agreement with Deuteronomy, where such a demand is repeatedly emphasized (4.29; 6.5; 10.12; 11.13; 13.4; 30.2, 6). However, it is quite possible that as far as the people at large were concerned, this prophet utterly despaired of curing them of their moral and religious corruptions. His only aim was to save a remnant which would be worthy of the mercy of the Lord, so that Israel should not be utterly lost. This remnant would be the nucleus of a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation," as Israel was expected to be. Thus it would be natural that he should have tried to imbue them with the highest standard of religion, "the Knowledge of the Lord," which should enable them to enter into the most intimate relations with the Lord, and make them fit to become "the Chosen People" in truth. As a matter of fact, his doctrine of a connubial relationship between the Lord and Israel was not more excessive than that of Deuteronomy, which demands: "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (6.5).

While Hosea presents the covenant between the Lord and Israel in the light of a connubial relationship, and "the Knowledge of the Lord" is the love and devotion prevailing in such a connubial state, Isaiah's conception of this doctrine was somewhat different. This prophet regards the covenant between the Lord and Israel in the light of a filial relationship, and "the Knowledge of the Lord" is the

mutual love between son and father. A son devoted to his father with heart and soul would never think of committing an act that might displease him or would not meet with his approval. But Israel was far from acting in that way, and Isaiah expresses the divine displeasure with the words: "Sons have I reared and brought up, and they have rebelled against Me" (1.2). Now filial love is not a right that could be legally enforced. Nor is it a matter of gratitude on the part of the children. It would be unreasonable to say that children must love their parents and be grateful to them for having brought them into existence. Even the care with which they tended them in their infancy and childhood, when they were unable to care for themselves, cannot be a reason for love and gratitude toward the parents. All creatures not endowed with reason do the same to their offspring. The mutual love between parents and children is a natural law, to which both man and beasts are subject, and there is no greater crime than to act against nature. This was Isaiah's conception of the mutual love that should exist between the Lord and Israel. But they rebelled against a natural law. In accusing Israel of not knowing the Lord: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know (Me), My people doth not consider" (1.3), he does not mean to declare that the Lord's nature or His existence, or His laws were unknown to them. He would not have condemned them so severely if their conduct had been due to ignorance or to erroneous religious conceptions. He uses the term *pāsha'* which means "to act presumptuously." He observes that Israel had shown themselves less intelligent than domesticated animals, that find by instinct the way to their master's house, and it is not necessary to lead them. If Israel would know the Lord, they would find their way to Him, without being led or forced. Dumb animals if well treated love their master and follow him willingly. If Israel would remember the Lord's parental care for them,

their heart would be filled with love and gratitude toward Him, and they would willingly obey all His commandments. Thus Isaiah taught that Israel's relationship toward Jahveh should be with them a matter of instinct, the result of a natural law that regulates the conduct between parents and children. This would be "the Knowledge of the Lord."

This doctrine of Isaiah is found only in the Messianic prediction of chapter XI. There it is stated that the Messiah will be endowed with "the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord" (11.2). But we have already pointed out that there may be here a scribal error, as it would be a rare instance of two co-ordinated construct cases depending on the same genitive. And if the quality of "the knowledge of the Lord" is superior to that of "the fear of the Lord," we may certainly contend that the original text read: "the spirit of the knowledge of the Lord." The former attribute is referred to again in the following passage: "And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord" (11.3). But the originality of this passage is still more questionable, and it has been taken as a corrupt dittograph of the preceding passage: "The spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." There is another reference to "the Knowledge of the Lord" in the same Messianic chapter which reads: "For the land shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (11.9). Thus not only the Messiah but also the whole of future Israel will be in possession of "the Knowledge of the Lord." On this point Isaiah is in agreement with Hosea, who said the same, that when the Lord would have betrothed Himself to Israel forever, they shall know the Lord (Hosea 2.22). If, however, we accept the critical view that denies this Messianic prediction to Isaiah's authorship, this chapter must be left out of consideration in the investigation of our subject. But it is noteworthy that the term "knowledge of God" occurs only once in the post-exilic literature, where it reads: "Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowl-

edge of God" (Prov. 2.5) . It is also very probable that a good many of the sayings of Proverbs date from a pre-exilic period. Seeing, however, that the term "Knowledge of the Lord" occurs twice in this Messianic prophecy, this may be taken in support of scholars who consider it pre-exilic.

Now this Messianic prophecy is currently totally misinterpreted. We have not here an ideal age in which wickedness will completely disappear. This prophecy clearly states about the Messiah: "With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the land; and he shall smite the tyrant with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked" (11.4) . Thus there will be in this age rich and poor, tyrants and wicked people. Now if the nature of man will not be changed in this period, how can we expect wild beasts to be better in this respect? It is thus obvious that the descriptions of verses 7-9, that the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, etc., were intended metaphorically. There will be all kinds of destructive people, whose nature is compared to that of wolves, leopards, lions, asps, and basilisks, but owing to the rule of justice and righteousness they shall be harmless, because they would be certain to be punished. Man can easily restrain his evil inclinations, if there is no possibility to escape retribution, seeing that the Messiah will not judge on the testimony of human witnesses, as the prophet states: "He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither shall he decide after the hearing of his ears" (11.3) . Moreover, the description of the Messianic conditions in using these metaphors, though making the wild beasts herbivorous, as otherwise they could not exist, does not mean to indicate that they would lose their savage nature altogether, so that they will not have the ability of doing any harm. The very statement: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain" (11.9) clearly shows that outside of the dominion of the Messiah, they will continue to act

according to their savage nature. But it would not be preposterous to ascribe to the prophet such a puerile conception that wild beasts would change their savage nature as soon as they enter in the dominion of the Messiah. Thus it is obvious that this description must not be taken in a literal sense. Finally, it is certainly a more exalted ideal to be endowed with all the frailties of human nature and suppress them on account of obedience to the will of God than to lose all inclinations to do evil. We have seen that the latter ideal was that of Hosea, and this was his meaning of "the Knowledge of the Lord." Isaiah, however, is fully satisfied if Israel would be mindful of their filial relationship toward the Lord in suppressing their evil inclinations in order not to displease Him, and this was his conception of "the Knowledge of the Lord."

With regard to the prophet Jeremiah, the key to the standard of his conception of a truly righteous man may be found in his summons proclaimed in the name of the Lord: "Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any one that doeth justly, that seeketh truth, and I will pardon her" (5.1). Now is it conceivable that in such a large city as Jerusalem, there should not have been found one single God-fearing person that acted justly and sought the truth? It would be a strange phenomenon not to find even in a heathen city one single person of that type. Was Jeremiah the only God-fearing man in Jerusalem, and did he not have some disciples and a few partisans who were seeking the truth and striving to lead a righteous life? Furthermore, was Jeremiah the only prophet of the Lord during this period? If this prophecy should be assigned to the early years of Josiah's reign, Zephaniah's prophetic activity undoubtedly belongs to the same period. The headline of Zephaniah's prophecies states: "The word of the Lord which came unto Zephaniah . . . in the days of Josiah the son of Amon,

king of Judah" (1.1). If, however, Jeremiah's discourse under consideration should be dated in the reign of Jehoiakim, the prophet Habakkuk, who predicted the coming of the Chaldeans, must have been Jeremiah's contemporary. If Nahum's oracle against Nineveh should be dated shortly before the downfall of Assyria, as many scholars maintain, the activity of this prophet coincided with that of Jeremiah. The prophet Obadiah seems to have witnessed the downfall of Jerusalem, and thus lived also during that period. Ezekiel, whose prophetic activity in Babylon began in the fifth year of Zedekiah's reign, must have been a truly righteous man in Jerusalem, before he was carried into captivity with Jehoiachin. If so, none of these men were accounted as righteous and seeking the truth in the eyes of Jeremiah.

Now the religious conception of Jeremiah may be found in the term *Emūnah* "truth, faithfulness" that he uses in his summons, in requiring of a righteous man the striving for this quality. The same term is used by Hosea in the words: "And I will betroth thee unto Me with *Emūnah*; and thou shalt know the Lord" (2.22). We see that it was one of the conditions on the basis of which the Lord will betroth Himself to Israel. The prophet Hosea intended a climax in the enumeration of these conditions: First, righteousness and justice; second, *Hesed* and compassion; third, and this surpasses all the former, *Emūnah* "truth, faithfulness"; but still higher than this latter quality and the result of all of them is "the Knowledge of the Lord." That *Emūnah* was regarded as the highest religious principle is seen from Habakkuk, who proclaims it as the quintessence of all human virtues, which contains in a compressed form all the religious ideas both moral and ritual: "But the righteous shall live by his *Emūnah*" (Habakkuk 2.4). This was the conception of the Rabbis that Habakkuk had reduced all the divine commandments to the single principle of *Emūnah*. Paul likewise based his doctrine of jus-

tification by faith on this prophetic principle. Now it would seem that this prophet was very broadminded in freeing man from the observance of all moral and ritual injunctions, and requiring nothing but *Emūnah*. As a matter of fact, this prophet was more exacting than the spiritual leaders, who insisted on the strict observance of all divine commandments, in basing the conduct of the righteous on this principle. If *Emūnah* is indeed such an exalted religious ideal, its attainment must be exceedingly difficult even for the righteous, and to the people at large it was practically inaccessible. Measured by the standard of *Emūnah*, very few people could be accounted as being righteous.

But what is *Emūnah*? If it is rendered by "Truth," the old question may be raised: What is Truth? It must denote a "Faith" so firm and strong, so deeply rooted in heart and soul that no power is able to shake it, that no sufferings and no temptations can move it from its place. This is the faith by which the righteous is expected to live. Now it stands to reason that such a righteous man would of course strictly observe all divine commandments. But on the other hand, one who does not possess this faith may likewise punctually live up to all divine commandments both moral and ritual. For even among those who willingly walk the path of the righteous, there will be very few who strive to reach such a state of perfection, in obliterating their subjective nature altogether. Ecclesiastes frankly declared that righteous men of this type are non-existent, in saying: "There is not a righteous man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not" (7.20). The same condition prevailed in the days of Jeremiah. Though the people in general were religiously and morally corrupt, there were certainly not a few, including prophets, who were leading a righteous life, in accordance with the biblical commandments, but did not strive after perfection in seeking after *Emūnah*, and thereby totally submerging their subjectivity, to come up

to Jeremiah's conception of a truly righteous man. They believed that man could lead a God-pleasing life, even if his heart is beset by some doubts and temptations, as long as he is able to subdue them. Surely in such a state man is never secure, and may stumble at any time, especially in an environment as corrupt as that of Jerusalem. Nevertheless they took a chance of being firm enough to resist the influence of their environment.

Jeremiah was bitterly disappointed at not finding one among them willing to seek *Emūnah* and perfecting himself thereby to be safe against all external influences. If Jerusalem could have produced one single individual of such a high type, this would have been taken as evidence that it was not yet thoroughly corrupt, and that there was still a hope of its redemption, and the Lord would have pardoned her. How could a man of that kind grow up and live in such immoral and irreligious surroundings? If a man like that was able to exist there, was not there a possibility that the city would produce other men fully devoted to the Lord with their hearts and souls? And it was indeed a fair test of the conduct of Jerusalem. The fact that a righteous man of such a type could exist there would prove at the same time the existence of decent people with whom he could associate who did not object to his conduct. Jeremiah could not have meant to say that God would pardon Jerusalem for the sake of this righteous man, just as God would have pardoned Sodom and Gomorrah for the sake of ten righteous men, if they had existed there (Gen. 18.32). We know that this prophet, like Ezekiel, taught the doctrine of individual responsibility (31.29-30), and Jerusalem could not have been saved for the sake of righteous men who lived there. We have seen that "the Knowledge of the Lord" can be attained only by those who are in the possession of *Emūnah*. If there was no man whose conduct was based on this high principle, it is natural that there should be no one who has "the Knowledge

of the Lord." Jeremiah indeed accuses all the people without exception, that they do not know the Lord (9.2, 5). This general condemnation corresponds to his assertion that there was no one who was acting justly and seeking *Emūnah*.

Jeremiah, like Hosea, presents the covenant of the Lord with Israel as a connubial relationship. But in making this comparison, he expresses the view that, if the connubial vows have been broken on the part of Israel, they could not be restored, saying: "If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, may he return unto her again? will not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; and wouldst thou yet return to Me? saith the Lord" (3.1). The prophet refers of course to the law of divorce (Deut. 24.1-4). Looking at it from such a point of view, the condition of Israel would be hopeless. Now the connubial relationship rests upon the legal act of marriage, and can be dissolved by the legal act of divorcement. Thus it is less permanent than filial relationship that rests on a natural law, as we have seen, and is indissoluble. The latter relationship was claimed by Israel based upon the statement: "Ye are the children of the Lord your God" (Deut. 14.1). But Jeremiah protested against it, saying: "Thou hadst a harlot's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed. Didst thou not now cry unto Me: 'My Father, thou art the friend of my youth!'" (3.3-4). He admits that it was the intention of the Lord to treat them as children; since, however, they have shown an unfilial attitude toward the Lord, He will no longer regard them as children but in the light of a connubial relationship which is dissoluble: "And I said: 'Thou shalt call Me, My Father; and shalt not turn away from following Me.' Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord" (3.19-20). With respect to Northern Israel, the prophet states distinctly

that the relationship between the Lord and Israel was dissolved by a bill of divorcement, and he threatens the same fate for her sister Judah, if she does not wholeheartedly return unto the Lord: "And I saw, when, forasmuch as backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorcement, that yet treacherous Judah her sister feared not; but she also went and played the harlot; and it came to pass through the lightness of her harlotry, that the land was polluted, and she committed adultery with stones and trees; and yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not returned unto Me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the Lord" (3.8-10). We notice, by the way, that Jeremiah is not satisfied with an improvement of Judah's conditions, but demands a wholehearted return unto the Lord, and anything short of it, he brands as *sheker*, "a lie." Thus it would seem that Jeremiah in using the conception of a connubial relationship between the Lord and Israel went far beyond Hosea, who promised the resumption of this relationship under more favorable conditions, while he would consider such a resumption against the law. However, as a matter of fact, both shared the same view. Jeremiah cites only a point of law, according to which the resumption of the connubial relations in such a case would not be permissible. But we have seen that *Hesed* means to do more than strict justice demands, and that one who acts in that way is designated *Hasīd*. One of the attributes of the Lord is "abundant in *Hesed*" (Ex. 34.6; Num. 14.18, etc.), and He does not insist upon the letter of the law. Therefore the Lord said to Jeremiah: "Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say: Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; I will not frown upon you; for I am a *Hasīd*, saith the Lord, I will not bear grudge for ever" (3.12).

We see then that there is no difference between Jeremiah and Hosea with regard to the relationship of the

Lord with Israel. The same holds true of the conception of "the Knowledge of the Lord." Jeremiah neither refers to the knowledge of His existence nor of His nature nor of His laws. If there should still be any doubt on this point, it would be completely dispelled by this prophet's declaration that even those who were perfectly versed in Israel's Laws lack such a knowledge: "The priests said not: 'Where is the Lord?' and they that handle the *Torah* knew Me not" (2.8). Of the latter class, Jeremiah could not have said that they were ignorant of the Lord's existence or of His laws, if he had meant it in a literal sense. He may have been right in asserting that even men of this kind did not possess "the Knowledge of the Lord." There is a fundamental difference between "Belief" and "Knowledge." The latter means "Certainty," while the former means an idea approaching "Certainty." We may sincerely "believe," but something like doubt may still be lurking in our mind, which under certain conditions might expand to such an extent as to undermine our "Belief." Jeremiah himself was not free from such moments of despair, in which he was actually in danger of losing the belief in his own prophetic mission, and was severely reprimanded by the Lord for his faint-heartedness and told to repent: "Therefore thus saith the Lord: If thou return, and I bring thee back, thou shalt stand before Me; and if thou bring forth the precious out of the vile, thou shalt be as My mouth; let them return unto thee, but thou shalt not return unto them" (15.19). This evidently means that a man who claims to be the mouth-piece of the Lord must be free from all human frailties. The God-inspired prophet must not lower his belief to that of other people in having moments of doubt. He must have "Knowledge" which does not admit of any doubt. He must imbue the people with his own religious conceptions, in demanding of them the same high standard. If one is certain of a fact, there is nothing in the world that could make him doubt it; even if it is denied or doubted by the

whole world, he would still be certain of it; no arguments, deductions furnished by circumstances, or even the evidence of his own eyes could shake this Certainty. This is "the Knowledge of the Lord" based upon *Emūnah*. The latter term should not be rendered "Faith," which merely means absolute reliance upon a certain testimony; it should be rendered rather "Truth." But "Truth" is an undeniable fact. Thus according to Jeremiah, "the Knowledge of the Lord" and *Emūnah* = "Truth" are identical terms. This prophet expected of those who handle the *Torah* to penetrate into the "Truth" and to attain such a "Knowledge." If they did not, it proved that they had no real understanding of the Divine Laws which they taught the people. If the spiritual leaders are blind to the "Truth," the people led by them were bound to go astray. How could they direct them to the path leading to truth, if this final destination was unknown to themselves? Being on the wrong path, how could the people be expected to know the Lord which should be the final aim? This prophet ascribes the reluctance of those who handle the *Torah* to be seekers after the truth of their conduct. If their deeds would be in conformity with the ordinances of the *Torah* they handle and teach, they would seek the truth. He maintained that they were not truthful in their actions, being indifferent to the very ordinances they teach others, and how could they be expected to seek the truth? He may have thought like Hosea who said of the people: "Their deeds will not suffer them to return after their God" (5.4).

Now Jeremiah himself gives a definition of "the Knowledge of the Lord": "Thus saith the Lord: Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord who exerciseth *Hesed*, justice, and righteousness in the earth, for in these

things I delight, saith the Lord" (9.22-23). In this statement we may see again Jeremiah's doctrine that God does not care for sacrifices and rituals and demands only the observance of the moral commandments. But does he indeed mean to indicate thereby that one who does not restrict himself to the exercise of these moral postulates but honors God also with ritualistic observances is numbered among those who have no "Knowledge of the Lord"? Is it not a fact that there was none more zealous in the observance of the Mosaic sacrificial and ritualistic precepts than King Josiah (II Kings 23.25). Yet it was of this king that this prophet said in the denunciation of his successor Jehoiakim: "Did not thy father eat and drink and do justice and righteousness? Then it was well with him. He judged the cause of the poor and needy, then it was well. Is not this *to know Me?*" (22.15-16). Jeremiah thus admitted that even among the ritualistic pious people there is no lack of "the Knowledge of the Lord," as long as they are morally religious. His denunciation could have been directed only at those who stressed the import of ritualistic observances and at the same time neglected the moral requirements of Israel's religion. However, it is rather questionable whether in the passage under consideration we may see a denunciation of ritualistic piety. The prophet may have meant to say that one who possesses a real understanding of the working of Providence will find that the Lord exercises mercy, justice and righteousness on earth, and that this is His delight. One who strives to please Him shall act in the same way. True, such a conduct of life is the fundamental essence of Israel's religion. But one whose exercise of these virtues is based on his "Knowledge of the Lord" stands on a higher plane than one who does it on account of his obedience to the Law, and may rightly glory in it, as he does it of his own free will, striving thereby to please the Lord, while others must walk humbly before Him in doing merely their duties. The Rabbis expressed

the same idea: "It is written: 'and shalt cleave unto Him.' " Now is it possible to cleave unto the Lord? But it means: cleave unto His deeds; as He is merciful, be thou also; as He is gracious, be thou also, etc. However, if this was Jeremiah's conception of the "Knowledge of the Lord," who knows whether the other prophets who used this term conceived it in the same sense?

"The Knowledge of the Lord" of the Prophets, which may have been of a purely spiritual nature, gained by a deep penetration into the Nature and Attributes of the Lord, must not be confounded with another kind of "Knowledge of the Lord" gained by human experience. If prophets predicted certain events in the name of Jahveh, and they came true in accordance with the prophetic prediction, this fulfillment was taken as absolute evidence of His existence and power. Such a knowledge could be acquired by both Israel and heathen alike, provided that the fulfillment of the prophetic prediction could not be explained in a natural way as a coincidence, but had to be taken as a supernatural event. However, there is nothing meritorious about the acquisition of a knowledge of the Lord based upon such a personal experience. Moreover, a knowledge of that kind is of a short-lived nature. The force of such an evidence endures during the lifetime of the generation that witnessed this supernatural event and knew that the prophet did predict it. Among the succeeding generations it is merely second-hand information, as they must rely upon the testimony of their ancestors, that such an event had actually occurred. They must have implicit faith in the truthfulness and sagacity of their ancestors as to its exactness and supernatural character. If there should arise any doubts in their minds with regard to these two qualities, the traditional evidence would lose its value. The farther the generation is removed from the time of this event, the less valuable would this evidence become. The tradition might have undergone some changes

in the process of transmission and thus would no longer be exact.

“The Knowledge of the Lord” of this type can endure only if it is strengthened by faith. But this is not “Faith” in God that He is able to perform such wondrous deeds. It is *faith* in their ancestors that they actually experienced these events, and could not have been deceived, and *faith* in their absolute honesty, that they told the event just as it occurred, without embellishing it with their own reflections. Such a *faith* presupposes a filial reverence of parents and ancestors that approaches ancestral divine worship. The fifth commandment of the Decalogue may indeed be regarded the fundament of Israel’s religion, with regard to its permanency. *Faith* in the integrity and sagacity of the ancestors is the consequence of the Law: “Honor thy father and thy mother.” Any ancestral creed would be ephemeral, and could never have endured without this religious doctrine of filial reverence toward the parents. From such a point of view it is natural that the religious beliefs in antiquity should have been of a tribal or national character, as they could endure only among the tribes or nations where they originated by reason of the *faith* in the ancestors who established them. Worship of ancestors among all heathen nations proves the strength of filial reverence prevailing among them. A transmission of a creed from one nation to another would have lacked the real basis on which it rested: the *faith* in the ancestors who were the founders of the creed. Israel, however, never had ancestor worship, and therefore filial reverence was not of such a force among them as it was among other nations. This may be the answer to Jeremiah’s question: “Hath a nation changed its gods, which yet are no gods? but My people hath changed its glory for that which doth not profit” (Jer. 2.11).

Therefore ancient nations did not propagate their creeds among other nations. Dissemination of creeds among other

racés may be of a comparatively recent date. The Zoroastrians may have been the first to start such a propaganda. But even this is not certain. They may have spread their creed only among the Iranians and in the dominions of the Persian empire. The Maccabeans forced Israel's religion on the Idumeans and other subject peoples within the Palestinian territory. But Christianity was the first to start such a propaganda on a grand scale and proclaimed it as an Article of Faith. It could do so, as it did not have a national or territorial character. The tribal or national character of a deity in that its power is limited to its own dominion was also the outcome of the tribal or national nature of the creed, the strength of which lay in the *faith* of its believers in their ancestors who established it. But as a matter of fact, the national conception of a deity could not always be reconciled with the power ascribed to it by its believers. Surely the votaries of Bêl-Marduk would have been deeply offended, if one would have dared to assert that he was not the Lord of the universe. The same is true of the Egyptian supreme god Amen-Ra to whom the rule of the world was also ascribed. The Phœnician Baal being designated "the Lord of Heaven," it was naturally understood that heaven and earth was his dominion. Nevertheless, it was a general conception of the national spheres of these deities, dating from an early period, when these creeds were purely national.

However, one might contend that "the Knowledge of the Lord" based on experience, which was transmitted to succeeding generations, not by oral tradition but by written documents, ought to be more reliable, as there is no fear lest this tradition had undergone changes and elaborations in the process of transmission. This may be partially correct, provided that the ancient original document is still extant, and we need not base this knowledge upon later copies. But even then one must have absolute *faith* in the integrity and wisdom of the first generation that testified

to their experience. If such a faith is lacking, their testimony may be doubted or even denied. If a later generation, that did not witness this experience, should because of unbelief turn its back on the creed of their fathers and serve other gods, the succeeding generation due to filial piety would naturally put more trust in their immediate progenitors than in more remote ancestors, in following their creed, and no longer possess "the Knowledge of the Lord." This actually happened, as biblical history records: "And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of the Lord, that He had wrought for Israel. . . . And there arose another generation after them, that knew not the Lord, nor yet the work which He had wrought for Israel. And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and served the Baalim" (Judges 2.7, 10-11).

Furthermore, a "Knowledge of the Lord" of that kind would be of no ethical value. One might know the existence and the power of the Lord, and not know that He demands of His worshippers certain rules of conduct in all their affairs both toward Him and in intercourse with their fellowmen. As, for instance, in their escape from Egyptian servitude and in the drowning of their pursuers, Israel plainly recognized the power of the Lord: "And Israel saw the great power which the Lord put forth against the Egyptians, and the people feared the Lord; and they believed in the Lord, and in Moses His servant" (Ex. 14.31). Yet this recognition alone would have been of no religious value, without the ordinances at Marah (ibid. 15.25), and without the Revelation on Sinai, where they received, face to face, the Decalogue. They could testify to the events witnessed there and to the Divine character of the Laws they received on Sinai. But what about the other commandments they did not receive personally from the Lord but from Moses? Their acceptance by Israel could

not have been due to their own personal knowledge of their Divine character, but to their *faith* in Moses. But this faith was also the result of the knowledge gained by experience. Having seen that all the predictions of Moses had come true, they knew that he was a true servant of the Lord, and therefore implicitly accepted all his ordinances as the expression of the Divine will. The faith of this generation being the outcome of their knowledge of the Lord may be defined as *certainty*. If Israel even in Egypt believed in the mission of Moses, this was likewise a faith based on the evidence of the supernatural signs that he performed in their own sight (ibid. 4.30-31). This evidence removed all the doubts in their minds, and they could not but be certain of the truth of his mission.

Nevertheless, the biblical account plainly states that this certainty was short-lived, both in Egypt and in the wilderness (Ex. 5.21; 6.9; 14.11-12; 16.3; 17.3; Num. 11.4-6; 14.2-3; 20.3-5). Thus it is obvious that the generation whose knowledge of the Lord and faith in the Divine mission of Moses were gained by personal experience often doubted the supernatural character of the events they witnessed, and Moses had to prove the truth of his mission by events of a similar nature. If outward appearance does not show the reality of persons and things, and is often deceiving, it is no surprise that the Israelites should have doubted the evidence, based on events that happened before their very eyes, as these human organs might have deceived them, so that in reality these events were not supernatural at all. Therefore, it is no wonder, if on certain occasions the Israelites reflected on their own experiences, whether they could not find for them an explanation in a natural way, and such a possibility was bound to deprive them of both the Knowledge of the Lord and the Faith in their leader's Divine mission. However, though their acquisition of the Knowledge of the Lord came to them through Moses, this fact would not have prevented the Israelites

from losing their faith in the Divine mission of the latter. Though not doubting that in the past he had been the mouthpiece of the Lord and the trusted agent of His will, but believing that he was after all a mortal and thus liable to commit errors and may thereby have lost His confidence, the Israelites therefore refused to accept all his actions as the expression of the Lord's will. He was forced to convince them again and again that there was no change in his relations to the Lord, and that in all his actions he was not swayed by his own will, but acted as the faithful executive of the Lord's commands. Israel's *faith* in Moses was not a faith in the real sense of the term but a distrust rather, as they did not believe without being convinced by evidence. They might have accepted his words without evidence, if they had been convinced that they expressed the Divine will.

However, Israel's *Faith* in the Lord was not of a high standard either, on account of its empiric nature, as it was acquired by them by reason of their experiences, and if man should not judge by outward appearance, their experiences might have been deceiving, and they could not trust even the testimony of their eyes. It was not identical with Abraham's Faith in the Lord, as it was not based upon any evidence, being the result of a "Knowledge of the Lord," acquired by an inner perception. Thus it is natural that it should have been of a higher order. The biblical account fully recognized the exceptional nature of his Faith: "And Abraham believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him as righteousness" (Gen. 15.6). The biblical author evidently meant to say that Abraham's Faith was of a sublime nature, rarely found among men, as Faith is with them the result of experience. This Faith was accounted as a *Ṣedaqah* and it renders its possessor a *Ṣaddiḳ*. Such a man is righteous in all his ways and cannot do wrong. It is this Faith to which Habakkuk referred in declaring: "But the *Ṣaddiḳ* shall live by his Faith" (2.4).

Such a Faith is identical with the prophetic ideal termed "the Knowledge of the Lord," acquired by an inner perception, for which the prophets looked in vain. Moses, however, had a wider outlook than his prophetic successors and a deeper insight into the nature of man, recognizing the difficulty of realizing such a sublime ideal, and was satisfied, if both their Knowledge of the Lord and their Faith should rest upon evidence. Now if the experiences upon which this evidence is based would have constituted a few isolated cases, the evidence might not have been strong enough to become the basis of a firm Faith in the Lord. But these experiences were so numerous, that the evidence was of a cumulative nature, the force of which could not be questioned. In the wilderness where Israel led a precarious existence and encountered one danger after another, they often lost their Faith in the Lord, and did not rely upon their former experiences of having been saved by the Lord, seeing in them mere coincidences. But having come within the sight of the Land of Promise, when they had crossed the wilderness, they could look back on experiences of forty years. The evidence from so many experiences, in which the hand of the Lord was visible, could no longer be doubted, and it constituted a firm foundation for Israel's Faith in the Lord, notwithstanding its empiric nature. The survey of these experiences on which Israel's Faith was founded is indeed found in the Book of Deuteronomy (1-4.24, 32-36; 5.1-30; 6.20-25; 9.7-29; 10.1-11; 11.1-7; 18.16-18; 25.17-19; 26.5-8; 29.1-8).

Now "the Knowledge of the Lord" that Israel gained from their experiences, and according to which their religious conceptions were formulated by the Lawgiver, was of a twofold aspect: Love and Fear. Notwithstanding their distrust, unbelief, backslidings and rebellions, the Lord bore patiently with them, in leading them safely through all the dangers, as it is stated: "And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the Lord thy God bore

thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came unto this place" (Deut. 1.31). Such a love and patience of the Lord toward Israel surely demands on their part a worship of the same nature: "To Love the Lord." But Israel experienced also the severe punishment of the Lord for their disobedience, and this taught them the other doctrine: "To Fear the Lord." In the Mosaic Books these two religious aspects are repeatedly emphasized, though "Love," with the exception of the Decalogue (Ex. 20.6), occurs only in Deuteronomy (5.10; 6.5; 7.9; 10.12; 11.13; 19.9; 30.6, 16, 20). But while Deuteronomy lays such stress on this mode of worship, it seems strange that none of the pre-exilic prophets exhorts Israel "to love the Lord." This would be in line with the fact that we have pointed out, that none of them places special emphasis on the doctrine "to fear the Lord" either. Yet Jeremiah refers to the love of Israel for the Lord: "Thus saith the Lord: I remember for thee the affection of thy youth, the love of thine espousals; how thou wentest after Me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown" (2.2). Surely the covenant of the Lord with Israel, whether presented as connubial relationship or filial relationship, implies of course mutual love. But we should think that if this doctrine is indeed of a sublime nature, as we may see from Deuteronomy, it ought to have been expressed clearly and not by implication. Why did they not use the terminology of Love and Fear, which is so frequently found in the Mosaic Books, in their prophetic exhortations? However, in view of the fact that "the Knowledge of the Lord," found in the Pentateuch, was the result of human experience, it could freely use the terminology of Love and Fear which are human emotions. But "the Knowledge of the Lord" of the pre-exilic prophets was not of an empiric nature, but the result of an inner perception, and therefore they avoided the use of the terminology of Love and

Fear, which are human emotions and not of a transcendental character.

We have referred to the fact that "the Knowledge of the Lord" based on evidence would be of an ephemeral character, as it could endure only during the life of the generation that witnessed the supernatural events from which this knowledge was derived. But the same holds true of the higher "Knowledge of the Lord" demanded by the prophets, which was not of an empirical nature, that it would pass away with the death of the individual who acquired it. On the other hand, though the latter could not be transmitted from one to another, nothing stood in the way of its acquisition by any individual possessing the will and firmness of mind to strive after it with heart and soul. This could not be said of a knowledge of an empiric character by witnessing supernatural events, as their occurrence is outside of man's will and power. Yet empiric knowledge is of a more practical nature, as supernatural events will impart such a knowledge to a multitude that witnessed them, while each individual must work out his own salvation in the endeavor to gain that prophetic knowledge. Moreover, the former does not require any effort on the part of its possessor, nor is it the result of a righteous life. On the contrary, supernatural events occurred for the sole purpose of convincing unbelievers; while the acquisition of the prophetic "Knowledge of the Lord" demanded immense efforts in striving after it, and the conduct of a righteous life. As a matter of fact, one who strives after it is in the least need of it for himself. But on the point of transmission both of them are alike. If they are transmitted to others, both lose their very nature, in being changed from *Knowledge* to *Faith* in those who transmitted them. Its existence is neither empirical nor transcendental, but presupposes implicit confidence on the part of its possessors in the honesty and sagacity of their ancestors or their spiritual teachers.

Considering, however, that Faith cannot be enforced, being a purely psychological trait, what blame can be attached to want of faith in the truth of traditions? From this point of view, one might ask whether the prophets were justified in condemning Israel for their unbelief in the religious principles transmitted to them by their ancestors or taught them by their spiritual teachers. But we may safely answer this question in the affirmative. If Israel turned their back on the religion of their ancestors and served the Baalim, they must have sincerely believed in the existence and divine power of these foreign gods. If so, their unbelief in the traditions of their ancestors could not be excused by the plea of having been of a sceptical turn of mind. Surely there was not the least reason for giving more credence to the priests and devotees of the Baalim as to their divine character than to their own ancestors who claimed to have personally witnessed the mighty deeds of the Lord or to have possessed absolute knowledge of the power of the Lord, of His commandments and the manner of His worship. Such a conduct showed a perverse nature. Other nations based their creeds on their faith in the integrity and sagacity of their ancestors who established them. Israel did just the contrary, in having no faith in their own ancestral traditions, but were ready to trust the traditions of strangers and accept their creeds. This was unnatural in the highest degree. Their conduct showed a contempt of their own ancestors nothing short of national treason.

There might have been an excuse for having disregarded the traditions of their ancestors, if the latter had done nothing for them to further their material welfare, if they could claim to have acquired their possessions by their own endeavors. But they were quite willing to enter into the material inheritance of their ancestors, which they had acquired with their blood. This acquisition their ancestors ascribed to their covenant with the Lord who

gave them this land as possession, and this was their only legal claim to this property. The descendants, however, who refused to enter into the spiritual possessions of their ancestors, in breaking this covenant, lost thereby the legal right to the material possessions of their ancestors. From their own point of view, the invasion of the land of Canaan by their ancestors had not the least justification, and their property ought to have reverted to the original owners. By their own conduct they expatriated themselves and lost all rights of citizenship of their own country by their own renunciation. In renouncing the God of their ancestors, the Canaanites were fully justified in treating them as strangers, avenging themselves on the foreign race that invaded their country without any reason, and trying to reclaim their lost possessions. This is indeed the constant theme of the prophets in their exhortations that Israel had disregarded the conditions on which their covenant with the Lord was based, and if so, they had no longer any claim to their land and must vacate it. Both the Pentateuch and the prophets emphasize this fact that the possession of Canaan was given to Israel conditionally in accordance with the terms of the covenant. We see then that the prophets in denouncing Israel were fully justified in doing so from a legal point of view which was incontrovertible.

Furthermore, the corrupt worshippers of Jahveh were even the more to be condemned than the outright apostates who had forsaken the worship of Jahveh altogether. The latter might have denied the existence of such a covenant and branded it as a later invention by the Jahveh-worshippers. If they had been asked how it happened that they were inhabitants of Canaan, they might have claimed to be the descendants of the aborigines. Some of the modern critics hold similar views concerning the origin of the Northern Tribes, and it is generally asserted by them that the Concubine-Tribes were Canaanites adopted into

the Israelitish confederacy. Similar views might have been expressed in antiquity by the idolators for the purpose of refuting the charge of having been disloyal to Jahveh. There may have been some truth in such a claim. Who knows whether the largest part of the Baalim-worshippers had not been the descendants of the Canaanites who had played such an influential part in the establishment of the Northern Kingdom? We must also consider that in some part of the country Baalim-worship might have continued for generations, and the earlier traditions might have been forgotten altogether, and they could not be blamed, if they had denied the reality of the Covenant of the Lord with Israel. Therefore the prophets in the pre-exilic period very rarely addressed themselves to the apostates. As a rule, they turned the whole force of their denunciations at the corrupt worshippers of Jahveh who believed in the ancient traditions of Israel and in the covenant that He entered into with them. The very fact that they scrupulously honored the Lord with sacrifices and ritualistic performances showed their belief in the God of Israel, and they were nevertheless persistently disregarding the moral obligations, without considering that they were the foundation on which Israel's covenant with the Lord was based.

In the biblical account Israel in the wilderness is regularly charged with lack of faith in Jahveh. Such a charge is rarely found in the prophetic literature, because the prophets, for the most part, addressed themselves to the ritualistic worshippers of Jahveh. There was no want of faith on their part. A charge of that kind would have been an extenuation of their guilt. On the contrary, they were firm believers in the power of Jahveh, as Micah expressed himself: "The heads thereof judge for reward, the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say: 'Is not the Lord in our midst? no evil shall come upon us' " (3.11). Thus this prophet testified that they were neither unbe-

lievers, nor of a sceptical turn of mind, nor hypocrites. Jeremiah's contemporaries were of the same type, whom this prophet warned not to trust upon the Temple of the Lord that it could not be destroyed (7.3-15). They must have sincerely believed in the power of the Lord, if they were absolutely certain that His sanctuary upon which His name was called could never come into the hands of the enemies. People with such a firm faith could not be charged with hypocrisy. Even in Isaiah's denunciation: "And the Lord said: 'Forasmuch as this people draw near, and with their mouth and with their lips do honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me, and their fear of Me is a commandment of men learned by rote'" (29. 13) must not be seen a charge of hypocrisy. What reason did they have to honor God with their mouth and their lips, if they did not mean it? It was an erroneous conception on their part that the mechanical recital of prayers as a matter of habit is pleasing unto the Lord, as it keeps in their minds His covenant with Israel. But such a conventional worship had no influence on their conduct, and the prophet rightly condemned it. To be sure there was no lack of hypocrites, as in all ages and among all nations, and Jeremiah said about the wicked, who were prospering, that the Lord is near in their mouth and far from their reins (12.2). But such a charge could not have been raised against the people at large. Therefore Jeremiah's statement: "And though they say: 'As the Lord liveth,' surely they swear falsely" (5.2) must not be taken to mean that they used the name of the Lord whenever they perjured themselves. It is nigh impossible that the people whom this prophet accused of regarding sacrifices as the sum and substance of their religion should have denied the existence of the Lord. The prophet cannot but mean: since this people have no proper conception of the Lord with regard to the moral obligations, their oath in His name in their transactions is of no force whatever and is like

the oath of a man who swears falsely. Nor did this prophet, in accusing Israel: "They have denied the Lord and said it is not He" (5.12), intend to assert that the people did not believe in the existence of the Lord. They denied that the prophet spoke in the name of Jahveh and therefore did not believe in his predictions, as it is clear from the context (5.13-14).

Furthermore, there was no lack of faith among the Israelites, whose religion was of a syncretistic character, who worshipped both Jahveh and Baal. They believed in the God of their ancestors but being superstitious they wanted to be on good terms with Baal. Jeremiah referred indeed to people who after offering to Baal came into the Temple to also offer sacrifices there in order to be on the safe side. Now we have pointed out that lack of faith is a psychological defect over which man had no control, and it would be wrong to say that the prophets condemned them on account of it. As a matter of fact, in Jeremiah's arguments against the worship of the host of heaven, he endeavored to restrain the credulity of the people: "Learn not the way of the nations, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the nations are dismayed at them" (10.2). If the people had used discretion in matters of belief, in not being easily persuaded to accept heathen customs, but after a thorough investigation, the prophets could not have condemned them for doubting their own messages in the name of the Lord. Bearing in mind that there is no record to the effect that the literary prophets convinced the people of the divine nature of their prophecies by supernatural signs, the people had no means to judge their prophetic character, whether to accept or reject their messages. And since their predictions always referred to events that would take place after a number of years, the people could not but withhold their judgment until the verification of these prophecies. The contemporaries of Isaiah actually challenged him to hasten

the fulfillment of his predictions, as only then they would be convinced of their true character: "Let Him make speed, let Him hasten His work, that we may see it; and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it" (5.19). In accordance with the criterion of a true prophet, as defined in Deuteronomy (18.22), this challenge does not seem to have been without justification. Yet on the acceptance of such a challenge, the prophets would have been in a precarious position. We have already dwelt on the fact that all the prophetic predictions were of a purely conditional nature, and we have seen that this doctrine was clearly pronounced by Jeremiah (18.7-10). Without this doctrine, the prediction of the prophets would serve no practical purpose. The only aim of their prophetic mission was to lead Israel in the way of the Lord, and if they strayed away, to guide them back into it. The prophets did it by threatening the transgressors with the displeasure of the Lord and the consequent penalty for their misdeeds, and by promising the Lord's protection and His benefits to those whose conduct is pleasing to Him. But if the condemnation had been a sentence without appeal, repentance would have been useless and out of consideration, since it could not save the sinners from the consequences of their evil deeds. On the other hand, the promise of rewards for leading a God-pleasing life, if it had been absolute, would have encouraged the righteous people to follow henceforth the line of least resistance, in not restraining their natural inclinations any longer, as God would have been powerless to inflict upon them a penalty for their disloyalty.

We see then the fundamental import of the doctrine with regard to the conditional character of the prophetic predictions. If their words had been as immutable as Fate, the religious activity of the prophets would have been of no use whatever. Both their threats of punishment and their promises of rewards were purely conditional. The

threats were of no effect if the transgressors heeded the prophetic warnings and repented. By the same token, the promises of rewards for a righteous conduct could not be kept as soon as the righteous turned away from the right way. Neither of them are fixed decrees. The people themselves are masters of their own destinies, and it depends upon them whether the words of the prophets should be fulfilled or repealed. This conception is expressed by Isaiah in the words: "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword" (1.19-20). The discourse in which this passage occurs was addressed to the most hardened sinners as depicted in that address. Though it was placed at the head of Isaiah's prophecies and constitutes the first chapter of his Book, there is internal evidence from its contents that it was delivered by the prophet after an activity of many years. Thus it was not for the first time that the prophet had warned them and had condemned their immoral conduct. Though the people heeded not the exhortations and threats of the prophet and did not change their ways, nevertheless Isaiah did not pronounce upon them an absolute decree of doom for their stubbornness. The prophet still expressed himself conditionally and called upon them to hearken to the word of the Lord in promising them the good of the land for their obedience. How could it have been otherwise? If a prophet had lost his patience with the people by pronouncing upon them a fixed sentence of punishment, the usefulness of his prophetic activity would have been at an end. Isaiah may have clearly recognized the hopelessness of his mission, that all his endeavors were in vain. Nevertheless having been appointed as a watchman unto the house of Israel, he was not permitted to desert his post, and his warning had the only purpose: "To warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life" (Ezekiel 3.17-18).

However, one might object to the conditional concep-

tion of prophecy, and contend that the same rules that govern Israel's Penal Code should be applied also to the prophetic condemnations. One sentenced to death by a terrestrial court cannot save his life by repenting of the crime he committed, and the sentence of death will be carried out notwithstanding his confession of repentance. The prophetic sentence of doom pronounced upon an individual or upon a nation is a Divine judgment of the Heavenly Judge for having transgressed presumptuously the Divine Laws. Would it not be reasonable that the individual or the people of Israel that despised the Divine commandments should be judged in accordance with the penalties in having to atone for their crimes notwithstanding their repentance? However this comparison is wrong. Human law is forced to ignore the repentance of the criminal. Otherwise no punishment could be inflicted upon the transgressors, and the laws could never be enforced. The most wicked criminal could escape his punishment by expressing a few words of repentance. The human judge has no means of knowing whether the repentance is sincere or not. The civil law might have taken repentance into consideration in the execution of the sentence, if there had been a way to test the heart of the criminal and to decide whether he deeply regretted his evil deed and was firmly resolved to walk henceforth the straight road of the just. Seeing, however, that this was impossible, the law had to disregard repentance in the execution of the judicial decree. But this cannot be said of a judgment pronounced by the Heavenly Judge Who knows the heart and reins of every man and sees whether the individuals or the peoples sentenced by His judgment sincerely repented of their sins and are resolved to lead a better life in accordance with His will. That a human judge, if in the same position, would act in the same way, may be seen from Isaiah's description of the Messiah as judge, saying of him: "And he shall not judge

after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears" (11.3). This obviously means that he would be able to look into the heart of the criminal and could not be deceived by appearances. This he could do being in possession of the spirit of the Knowledge of the Lord. We see then how reasonable it is that the prophetic threats of punishment should be purely conditional.

This conception of the prophetic messages is so obvious that there does not seem any need to dwell on it. Yet this fact is absolutely denied by not a few of the modern critics. For instance, they contend that in Isaiah's sublime Theophany, by which he was inducted into his prophetic office (6.1-13), the doom of Israel was inevitably fixed; that this prophet was commissioned to announce to them their doom from which they should not be able to escape by repentance. Now it must be admitted that the contents of this vision, the message entrusted to the prophet on his induction, seem exceedingly obscure. The purpose of this heavenly vision was to entrust Isaiah with the Lord's message to His people. The Seraph had purified him from his sins by touching his lips with a burning coal or stone taken from the altar. We expect to find that this symbolic act was done for the purpose that Isaiah might purify Israel from their iniquities, in announcing to them their doom if they did not repent. But this message was: "Go, and say unto this people: Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not" (6.9). But if this was the whole purpose of this heavenly scene, does it not look like "much ado about nothing"? The very fact that Isaiah said: "And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: Whom shall I send? and who will go for us?" (6.8), leaves no room for doubt that there were no prophets during this period whom the Lord deemed worthy to be entrusted with His message to Israel. Thus the people had not been warned by a true prophet to forsake their evil ways. If they did not have the benefit of spiritual guidance by a

God-inspired prophet, we would expect Isaiah to fulfill this office. Now does it not sound strange that, instead of a call for repentance issued from this newly-installed spiritual leader, we should hear the voice of absolute condemnation? Or shall we assume that there was no want of prophets during this period who warned them of the impending doom, if they did not repent, and notwithstanding their vain efforts, they shrank back from the task of pronouncing their doom unconditionally, and Isaiah was the only one who possessed the courage to accept this message of doom to Israel? But the announcement of doom was not a message intended for Israel, but for the prophet's own information. The only message which he had to deliver to Israel was that "they should hear and not understand, and should see and not perceive," if we may take these words literally. But what is the meaning of these words?

Now in a later period of his activity, Isaiah arraigned the people for observing scrupulously the performance of rituals but disregarding all moral obligations. It was not due to the fact that the Mosaic Laws were unknown to them. But they acted without discretion, in a perverse manner, in being indifferent to the fundamental principles of Israel's religion, and observed rituals which were merely of a symbolic significance. They heard the words of the Lord, but lacked the understanding of distinguishing between fundamentals and symbolic observances. They must have seen that their conduct was not in conformity with the Divine will, but they did not perceive the fact of having committed any wrong, and still regarded themselves as worshippers of the Lord and His chosen people. A people of that type do not deserve any consideration, as they have eyes, and do not want to see, they have ears, and do not want to hear, and have a heart, and do not want to understand. They are not blind, deaf, and foolish by nature, and therefore cannot find their way, if not properly guided, but willingly close their eyes, ears, and heart, to

that which the Lord demands of them, and are bound to lose their way. Do they not deserve to be blind, deaf, and heartless, since they possess these organs and do not make any use of them? Should they be forced to open their eyes, ears and heart, and not to suffer for their perversity? Would it not be more proper to encourage them in their folly to walk on the wrong path leading to their destruction, that they should have to pay the penalty for their conduct? The prophet is thus commissioned by the Lord to tell the people that they "shall hear, but not understand, and shall see, but not perceive." This would mean: since the people did not make use of the organs of hearing and seeing, they will become defective and no longer function properly, and the people will not be able to have a proper conception of what they see and hear.

However, if this should be the meaning of Isaiah's message, the prophet certainly expressed himself in a cryptic manner that was impossible to be understood by the people. They could hear and see this message without having the slightest notion of what it referred to. Is it credible that the prophet delivered a message the meaning of which was hidden from the people and which required a lengthy interpretation? If the prophet had intended to inform the people of their doom, would he have expressed himself in a roundabout way, so that the people did not know what he aimed at? If the people were not expected to know of their doom, why this message at all, since its hidden meaning referring to their doom was unknown to them? Or was this mystic message conveyed to the prophet intended that the people should doubt his sanity and turn their back on his exhortations? Still more strange in this vision is the prophet's commission to harden the heart of the people and confirm them in their error, that they should not repent, as he was told: "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they, seeing with their eyes and hearing with their ears,

and understanding with their heart, return, and be healed” (6.10). We may well conceive that the Lord turns away from people far gone in iniquity, and no longer warns them through His prophets, in order that they may go down to their doom and receive their well-merited punishment. God may even harden the heart of the people by not depriving them of their prosperity for a long period, so that they do not care for the prophetic exhortations. Or God may infuse them with a spirit of scepticism, so that they should doubt the divine character of the prophetic messages and refuse to accept them. This conception we find in the biblical statement that the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh. He doubted the supernatural character of the signs performed in his presence and that of the plagues, or the power of the Lord to free Israel from Egyptian servitude. But how can we conceive the idea that Isaiah should have been expressly commissioned to lead the people astray, that they should not correct their ways?

Now there is a somewhat similar parallel to the subject under consideration in the vision of Micaiah, where the spirit said: “I will go forth, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets” (I Kings 22.19-23)—we have already dwelt on this vision and explained its meaning. However, this is not a real parallel. The purpose of the lying spirit was to entice Ahab to go to war and fall in battle. The lying spirit was his executioner. But Isaiah would have played the part of a lying spirit to prevent Israel from repentance. And would it not be repugnant to our feeling the very idea that Isaiah should have been commissioned to play the part of a lying spirit in order to lead the people away from the Lord? The Rabbis declare: “If one is coming to purify himself, the Divine Powers assist him to accomplish his purpose; but if one is coming to defile himself, they open the gates for him.” Israel in that period may have belonged to the latter class. Thus in accordance with this rabbinical idea, there would

be no objection, if Isaiah should have been commanded by the Lord to keep silence, and not warn them of their impending doom, so that they might perish in their iniquities. But is there any justification for commanding Isaiah to become a lying spirit in confirming the people in their disobedience to the Lord? There would be less objection if our text should read: "But I will make the heart of this people fat, and will make their ears heavy, and will shut their eyes; lest they, seeing with their eyes and hearing with their ears, and understanding with their heart, return, and be healed." For we may well conceive that the Lord should close "the Gates of Repentance" to a people extremely wicked that obstinately reject His commandments. But from a prophet we expect nothing but the truth in his prophetic activity.

The New Testament seems to have been aware of this difficulty in Isaiah's Theophany, and explains it, according to Mark (4.11-12): "Unto them that are without (the kingdom of God), all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them." But if Isaiah in any other of his prophetic utterances ever spoke in dark parables, we know nothing about it. His speeches are absolutely clear, so that any child could understand them. There is no ambiguity about the parable of the vineyard (Isa. 5.1-7), as he explains it. However, we expect to find such an opinion in the New Testament. Its fundamental conception is that the prophets in their predictions often referred to events that would occur in the distant future, especially the rise of Christianity, and it is natural that it should have insisted upon the fact that the contemporaries of the prophets could not understand them. Modern scholars are of course forced to reject such a conception and contend that the pre-exilic prophets referred to events which they expected to occur

in their own days or in the near future. Thus such an interpretation does not bring us nearer to the solution of our problem.

Furthermore, the most difficult point in Isaiah's Theophany is that this prophet's whole prophetic activity is contrary to the idea that he was commissioned to prevent Israel from repenting. Did he not labor continually to bring Israel back to the Lord? Is not correction the theme of all his discourses addressed to his people, as far as they were not of a political nature? How is it to be explained that the same prophet who enunciated the inevitable doom of his people on his consecration should have been so deeply concerned in the welfare and independence of Judah during his whole prophetic career? Should we not think that he ought to have been indifferent to their existence and the political conditions of their country since their destiny was sealed? Finally is it not Isaiah who repeatedly expressed the fundamental idea of "a remnant" that will be saved, and this idea would be irreconcilable with the position he held on his induction into the prophetic office? Thus it is evident that there is no possibility of harmonizing his whole prophetic activity with the assumption that he had been commissioned as prophet to confirm the people in their error and to pronounce upon them an absolute decree of doom.

We might suggest that the doom enunciated in Isaiah's vision of induction refers only to Northern Israel, seeing that the prophecies clearly belonging to this prophet's early career are mainly directed at the Northern Kingdom (9.7—10.4; 17; 28.1-4). The fate predicted for this kingdom is indeed along the lines of the predictions of Amos and Hosea, and would be in agreement with the terms of the commission in the vision of his induction, which meant total destruction. On the other hand, Isaiah's attitude toward Judah does not correspond with his commission. But it has been objected that such a view is impos-

sible, seeing that in this vision the prophet must have referred to Judah, as he exclaimed: "Woe unto me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips" (6.5), and this vision occurred in the Temple of Jerusalem. Thus the people whose destruction was decreed must at least include Judah. This objection would be irrefutable, if we were certain that this theophany did occur in the Temple of Jerusalem, as it is generally held. But if Isaiah in many discourses addressed himself to Northern Israel, the presumption would be that in his early career he must have labored in the Northern Kingdom. This may well have been the case, prior to the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion of Judah, during the last year of Uzziah, immediately after his induction into the prophetic office, and the reign of Jotham. He may well have been a disciple of the Northern prophet Isaiah. Thus his theophany might have occurred in one of the sanctuaries of North-Israel. We might even suggest that the designation "a people of unclean lips" would be more fitting for the Israelites, who were far gone in iniquity and were morally and religiously corrupt, as we know from Hosea, than for the Judeans. Hence there would be no objection to a suggestion that Isaiah's enunciation of total destruction had been intended for the Northern Kingdom, and not for Judah.

However, an assumption that Isaiah's vision of induction had occurred in a sanctuary of North-Israel, and that there he had been consecrated as a prophet for the Northern Kingdom to announce its inevitable doom, would remove only the difficulty with regard to the impossibility of reconciling his commission with his prophetic activity in Judah. But even if we should admit this point, we must still contend that his induction as a prophet for the Northern Israelites would have had not the least purpose, if he had not been commissioned to preach repentance to them, so that they might escape their doom. Moreover, on what

ground could the prophets have announced Israel's total destruction? We have pointed out that according to the conditions of the Lord's covenant with Israel, they lost the right to the possession of their country. Therefore, the prophets were justified in announcing their exile from a country to which they did not have a claim any longer. But what justification did the prophets have to predict their total disappearance? However, as a matter of fact, the complete destruction of a country does not mean that its inhabitants would disappear altogether. This is no matter of argument, though it is often overlooked in dealing with the prophetic predictions concerning the fate of Israel. It is certainly daring to express the view that Isaiah predicted Israel's destruction "root and branch." Where history speaks, man can afford to keep silence. The land of Judah in accordance with the prophetic prediction was left a desolation, full of uninhabited ruins and untilled, but the Judeans did not disappear. As the mythical phoenix, after being consumed by its own act, the people of Judah rose again from their ashes, and founded a new state on the ruins of the land of Israel, established on more firm foundations than that of their ancestors, on the fundamental principles of Israel's religion. To be sure this state was not of political importance, being always more or less subject to a foreign power, and did not possess the semblance of independence as formerly. But it was in that period that the remnant of Israel became in fact the people of Jahveh, and no longer strayed away after other gods, as did pre-exilic Israel. The modern critics even maintain that the whole structure of Israel's religion dates from the period when the land of Judah had become a desolation. The same happened in later times. The destruction of the Jewish state by the Romans did not affect the existence of the Jews. The codification of the biblical and oral traditions dates from this period.

If we should accept the view of the modern scholars

who look upon prophecy from "present-day" thought, in declaring that there is no supernatural element in the prophetic predictions, we could not reconcile it with the fact that history actually verified Isaiah's prophecy in his vision of induction. He asks the Lord: *How long* is this disobedience of the people to go on? And the answer comes: "Until cities be waste without inhabitants, and houses without men, and the land becomes utterly waste, and the Lord have removed men far away, and the forsaken places be many in the land" (6.11-12). Is it not plain that this answer sets a limit to the disobedience of the people? If it meant that the disobedience is to continue until the people are exterminated, would this meaning be expressed in such a roundabout way? The prophet does not say that the Lord will exterminate the people, but that He will remove them far away. Such a removal must not necessarily affect their existence. Thus it is obvious that in this answer the thought is expressed that their disobedience will cease with their removal from their country. Was not this prediction literally fulfilled? But for this fulfillment, there would have been no trace left of the activity of the pre-exilic prophets and their predictions. The post-exilic compilers of the prophetic writings would never have included this prophecy among them, if they had seen in it a prediction of the total destruction of Israel. Now we may freely admit that the final words of this vision which reads: "so the holy seed shall be the stock thereof" are not original, and this addition is an annotation made after the time of the Septuagint, since it does not occur there. But this is merely an expansion of the preceding passage which reads: "As a terebinth and as an oak whose stock remaineth, when they cast their leaves" (6.13). Without the last explanatory gloss, it would have the same meaning. As long as the stock of a tree remains, a new tree will spring from it.

The policy of the Assyrians to transplant people from one land to another was certainly not unknown to Isaiah.

The transplanted peoples did not lose their identity when removed from their native lands, and continued to live according to their ancestral customs where they had been settled by their Assyrian captors. Thus there was not the least reason to assume that the Judeans far removed from their country would not preserve their identity. At home they turned their back on the exhortations of the prophets, because they did not believe in the divine character of their prophecies. But in the fulfillment of these predictions they would see the visible hand of the Lord, and would no longer be disobedient to His commandments. This was the prophetic expectation, and the subsequent events showed that it was not in vain. From the pages of history Isaiah could have learned that Israel in adversity always returned to the God of their ancestors, and thus he could expect them to run true to form, that in the captivity they would act in the same way, and no longer harden their hearts to reject the divine commandments. Thus this prediction does not refer to the total destruction of the people. Biblical scholars who hold such a view express themselves rhetorically: "The very desolation of Jahveh's country will speak of His righteous anger, which will not tolerate the sins of those whom He had chosen to be peculiarly His own." Was this the thought of Isaiah's vision? We might give this prophet some credit for common sense. The other nations did not believe in Jahveh and all the deeds that He did for Israel, knowing nothing about Israel's history. If Israel should have been exterminated root and branch, how could such an extermination reflect Jahveh's "righteous anger," since His name and His nature were known only to Israel? Would not the nations that executed Jahveh's judgment of extermination claim that their own gods were more powerful than the God of Israel? Did Isaiah expect his predictions to be known among the heathen? History has shown that it was the remnant of Israel that made the name of Jahveh known among the heathen and

proclaimed His righteous anger against the sins of Israel and the justice of His judgment. That this would happen ought to have been a foregone conclusion for Isaiah who so strongly emphasized the fundamental idea of a Remnant which would consist of those "returning unto God the Mighty" (10.21).

Thus there is not the least difficulty in the part of Isaiah's vision which states that the people of Israel will always be stiff-necked as long as they dwell in their own country, and therefore the country must be destroyed and its inhabitants removed from it. But Isaiah's message to the people consisting of the words: "Hear ye, but understand not; and see ye, but perceive not," would still remain obscure in the highest degree, as we pointed out. Further, the almost shocking idea that the prophet was consecrated by the Lord to become a "lying spirit" to encourage the people in their disobedience, "to make their heart fat, their ears heavy, and their eyes shut," to prevent their repentance, lest they be healed, is far from being near a solution. This difficulty cannot be smoothed over by rhetorical phrases. It is repugnant to our moral sense, as we have said. It would introduce a new principle into the moral code of Israel, that a lie is God-pleasing, if it is done for a pious purpose! Fancy Isaiah, the prince of the prophets, becoming a seducer of his own people in order to lead them to destruction! This is an impossibility of such a high degree, that any emendation that would remove this difficulty, be it ever so far-fetched, would be more probable and should be freely accepted, rather than to believe that the prophets, and especially Isaiah, whose ideal was absolute truth, should have stooped to such a degrading position of playing the part of seducers of their own people! In fact, a few slight changes in the vocalization of some words in this message would show the message in a different light. But first we must dwell on the position of the prophets in Israel.

CHAPTER IV

The prohibition of prophetic activities—The danger to the ruling classes—The force of habits—The priests of the Jahveh-sanctuaries—The leaders of fashion—The ubiquity of moral corruption in the past—Imitation of heathen customs—The principle of equality—Its renunciation—The rise of a nobility—The feudal system in Israel—Inequality the fundament of Israel and Judah—Equality the prophetic principle—The nobility in post-exilic times—The non-realization of the prophetic ideals—Aristocracy and Democracy—Religion the most effective force in human affairs—The prophetic testimony to the general oppression of the poor—The intemperate habits and the debauchery of the wealthy classes—Their defense of the state—Foreign mercenaries—The overthrow of aristocratic states by Assyria—The carrying of the leading classes into captivity by Sargon—The Israelites invited by Hezekiah to participate in the celebration of Passover—The precarious condition of Judah in case of foreign aggression—The social condition of Athens in the 7th century—Solon's social reforms—A great religious lesson in history—The principles of justice and righteousness easy of realization—Zedekiah's covenant with the people—The breaking of this covenant—An unprecedented crime—The submission of the common people to the nobility—The nobility left behind in Judah after the First Captivity—Ezekiel's testimony—The impression of the First Captivity on the common people—The idolatrous practices of the Judeans in Egypt—Their answer to Jeremiah—The breaking of the covenant by the idolatrous nobility—Their cruelty toward their own peers in captivity—The territorial conception of Jahveh's power—The condition of the captives in Babylonia—The Universalistic principle of Ezekiel—The celestial and terrestrial kingdoms compared—The modern misconception of the prophetic Universalistic principle—The hypocrisy of the nobility.

AMOS, the first of the literary prophets, charged the people of the Northern Kingdom with the crime of having prevented their own native prophets from exercising their prophetic office. He said: "And I raised up of your sons for prophets, and of your young men for Nazirites. Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel? saith the Lord. But ye gave the Nazirites wine to drink; and commanded the prophets, saying: 'Prophesy not' " (2.11-12). The same ac-

cusation is raised by Isaiah against the Judeans, who said: "For it is a rebellious people, lying children, children that refuse to hear the teaching of the Lord; that say to the seers: 'See not,' and to the prophets: 'Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy delusions; get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us'" (30.9-11). A similar statement is found by Micah, though the passage is somewhat obscure: "Preach ye not, they preach; they shall not preach of these things, that they shall not take shame" (2.6). The accusation sounds rather strange and almost incredible. Considering that both in Israel and Judah it happened very rarely that the government interfered with the religious conduct of the people whether they worshipped Jahveh, or Baal, or both, or any other deity, why should not the prophets have been permitted to preach and teach their own religious doctrines in the name of Jahveh? However, in a country where moral corruption prevailed, and this was the case in both Israel and Judah, where the nobles and rich were powerful and the poor were oppressed, the activity of the true prophets who publicly in the name of Jahveh condemned these social abuses was exceedingly dangerous to the ruling classes, as it might have led to civil war. The poor who constituted the overwhelming majority of the population would have been encouraged by the prophetic activity to rise against their masters and attempt to change these conditions. This was a sufficient reason for the government to look upon these prophets as demagogues and suppress their activity.

Even if the prophets in their exhortations did not refer to the social abuses but to the immoral conduct of the rich, and condemned their indulgence in excessive luxury, this likewise disturbed the peace of the country. The poor contrasted their own miserable conditions with the pleasures of the rich who could lead an easy life full of enjoyments at the expense of their tenants, and this was of course the

cause of envy and hatred, and may have led often to bloody strife. The continual condemnation of the ruling classes by the prophets was bound to undermine the respect of the lower classes for their betters. So also, if the prophets opposed the foreign policy of the government, they were looked upon as the enemies of the state. Thus it is natural that their political activity was also forbidden by the government which was in the hands of the ruling classes. The wealthy were of course fully satisfied with existing conditions and desired their perpetuation. They closed their eyes, their ears, and their hearts to all prophetic exhortations, declaring that such a state of affairs was not in conformity with Israel's religion, that it would lead to disastrous consequences, as a commonwealth can endure only if based on the principles of justice and equality. If they had listened to the prophets, they would have had to change their habits, and habit is the strongest force in human nature. Moreover, a change of habit often leads to a break with former associations, with relatives, and even with one's own children. There may have been not a few who knew in their hearts that the corruption prevailing in the land of Israel was not in accordance with the religion of Israel, and yet carefully avoided the prophets, lest they be convinced by them, and this would become a cause of discord in their own circles.

The prophets delivered their discourses in the Jahveh-sanctuaries during the festivals when the people came to appear before the Lord. In order not to come in contact with them, not to be compelled to listen to them, and not to be publicly denounced and abused, many of the wealthy classes preferred to attend the sanctuaries of the Baalim or of those of a syncretistic character, where they were certain not to meet with these prophets. The priests of the Jahveh-sanctuaries must have bitterly resented the activity of these prophets in their own precincts and accused them that by their denunciations they were driving the people away

from the worship of Jahveh. The prophets, on the other hand, branded the priests as hypocrites who were not zealous for the Jahveh-worship of the people, but to make up the loss of income they sustained by the absence of the wealthy classes. It is quite likely that the priests did everything in their power to keep the prophets away from their own sanctuaries, and they may have tried to preach outside of the temple-precincts to the assembled crowd. It is probable that what happened to Jeremiah, when he was preaching in the Temple-court to the people, that he was beaten and put in the stocks by the priest Pashhur, the chief officer of the temple (19.14-15; 20.1-2), may have been the lot of other prophets in the Jahveh-sanctuaries, if they did not cease their activity. Now the Rabbis say: "Just as it is a duty to say words that will be obeyed, so it is a duty to abstain from words which will not be obeyed." These prophets may have believed in the same principle. Seeing the hopelessness of their mission, many of them ceased their activity altogether. There were very few among them who cared to incur the hatred of the leading classes and to expose themselves to ridicule, abuses and sufferings, for no purpose whatever.

Under such circumstances, the people went from bad to worse. Injustice, immorality, oppression, and apostasy were bound to prevail in the land. The habit of the leading classes always becomes the fashion of the day. If they were corrupt, we cannot expect the middle classes to have been free from these vices. They naturally followed the lead of the nobility and the wealthy to whom they looked up with respect and admiration as their betters. The poor classes in the times of Amos and Isaiah were not better than those of the period of Jeremiah, of whom this prophet said: "Surely these are poor, they are foolish, for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the ordinance of their God" (5.4). If the leading and middle classes practiced all kinds of vices, the poor were no exception. Not giving the prophets a chance

to point out to them the error of their ways, the people gradually regarded these conditions as normal, and did not think that there was anything wrong in their conduct. If some of them had occasion to travel to one of the neighboring states, they found the conditions there much worse than in their own country. All the vices were there but in a more hideous and more aggravated form.

As a matter of fact, the moral corruption of Israel which the prophets so severely condemned, prevailed in almost all European countries till recent times. From the pages of history we know of the treatment of the serfs and the poor by their lords and masters. Did the poor ever have a ghost of a chance in a court of justice in suing their oppressors? Is there any record of the punishment of nobles by the government for the mistreatment of their serfs? Were not the lives of the serfs and those of their wives and children completely at the disposal of their lords? Yet most of these nobles were strictly religious and scrupulously observed all religious rituals. A great many of them even richly endowed religious institutions and were exceedingly generous toward the priests. Would any priest on their own domain have dared to condemn them as oppressors for disregarding the human rights of their serfs in treating them no better than their cattle and often much worse? Were they ever accused of corruption and immorality by their spiritual leaders for living off the labors of their serfs and leading a life of leisure and luxury at the expense of these miserable beings who had to toil unceasingly to provide the means for their pleasures? If we compare these conditions with those of Israel, the worst judgment that we could pronounce would be that Israel was not much better than other nations during that period. Nevertheless such a judgment would be too severe. Even in their most corrupt state, the people of Israel were morally far superior to the heathen nations by which they were surrounded. Their corruption was far from being general. Otherwise

the rise of prophets in Israel would have been impossible. No men of this type arose in the neighboring states as champions of the poor who dared to accuse the leading classes of injustice and other immoral practices. This may be taken as a foregone conclusion that no men of this type existed there, though no literary remains of the neighbors of Israel survived, and outside of biblical references to them, we know almost nothing from native sources. They were surely not better than the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians, and among them we do not find literary evidence that their spiritual leaders ever attacked the government and the nobles for their immoral conduct and accused them of injustice and oppression of the poor. Shall we indeed maintain that ideal conditions prevailed in these countries, and therefore the inscriptions are silent on the treatment of the lower classes by the nobles?

Seeing that the besetting sin of Israel was the imitation of the customs of the heathen, it is reasonable that they should have imitated them also on the points of injustice toward their poor brethren and all other immoral vices. This is a very important point that must be taken into consideration in the investigation of Israel's social conditions in the pre-exilic period, as it leads us to the source of their corruption. The people of Israel having been partly of an agricultural and partly of a pastoral occupation, their state and whole social structure were based on the principle of equality. As long as they were a peasant people and naturally possessed equal rights, the prevalence of injustice among them was out of consideration. But the election of a king was contrary to the principle of equality. This election was also an imitation of heathen customs, as Israel said to Samuel: "Make us a king to judge us like all the nations" (I Sam. 8.5). This was a fundamental change that affected the whole structure of Israel's state. With this act they renounced their rights of equality and became the servants of their autocratic ruler. He could freely dispose

of their possessions and endow his favorites with them, as Samuel indeed warned them: "He will take your field, and your vineyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants" (ibid. 8.11-18). The description of the royal prerogatives by Samuel demonstrates the social conditions of the neighboring states, where the common people had no rights whatever.

With Israel's state no longer based on the principle of equality, the rise of a nobility was the natural development. The country being in the nature of a royal domain, the king appointed his officials as governors over the various districts to supervise his estates, and to see to it that the tithes were properly paid. The governors probably appointed their own sons, relatives, or favorites as lower officers over the various towns and villages of their districts. These offices in the course of time may have become hereditary. If this happened, it is natural that after several generations these offices should have lost their original character. The officials claimed their villages as their fiefs and became their lords. The tithes and taxes changed thereby also their original character and were regarded as rents. The peasants were no longer the owners of their fields but became hereditary tenants, whose tenure depended upon their good behavior and their obedience to their lord. He was of course the highest authority on his estate and his will was law. However, it is not likely that oppression and injustice were the immediate consequences of such a feudal system in Israel. Most of these officers may well have exercised their authority in conformity with the laws of Israel's religion. We may well assume that the misuse of their power began on the whole with the establishment of the Omri-dynasty, when foreign influence had become paramount in Israel, due to the intermarriage of this dynasty with the Phoenician royal house. The introduction of the Phoenician Baal into Israel where this deity was intended to displace Jahveh as the supreme god of Israel by Jezebel

who murdered all the prophets of Jahveh, brought in its wake all other corrupt customs and conceptions. Israel's nobles imitated the conduct of the Phoenician nobility and became the arbitrary rulers of their estates. Following the lead of the royal family, the nobles became worshippers of Baal and the laws of Israel's religion were no longer binding for them. Imitating the luxury and splendor of the foreign nobles, they could secure the means only by various kinds of oppression and injustice toward the poor. The worship of the Baal demanded only sacrifices and the performance of rituals. When later Israel returned to the Jahveh-religion under the Jehu-dynasty, they continued to practice the same kind of religion, in worshipping Jahveh with sacrifices and rituals and disregarding the moral requirements of Israel's religion. Now due to the close relations of Judah with Israel during the Omri-dynasty which were still more cemented by its intermarriage with the Davidic dynasty, the same conditions prevailed in Judah, and its nobles became just as oppressive as those of Israel. They constituted the members of the royal court and they were the foremost officials. The government was practically in their hands. The king was helpless against them, and they could easily convert him to their own views. Even if he remained a faithful worshipper of Jahveh, he could not protect the poor against their oppression and injustice.

Thus while formerly the basis of Judah's and Israel's social structure was *equality*, it was now just the contrary: *Inequality* was the very fundament of these states. Any return to their former principle meant the uprooting of their very foundations. This could be effected only by a thorough-going revolution. Yet equality was the very principle upon which the prophets insisted. No wonder that the leading classes who had everything to lose and nothing to win by such an overturn refused to listen to these prophets. They actually trembled for the existence of the state, if the prophetic demand should be realized. They clearly per-

ceived that the prophets aimed at the destruction of the state and its restoration upon new foundations, the laws of Israel's religion, which meant the ancient principle of equality, the fundament of justice. This restoration demanded an equal distribution of all the existing property, abolishing all differences of rank, from the highest to the lowest, and establishing a new order of society, under which even the slaves would become equal citizens of the state. However, this prophetic ideal was never fully realized, even after the return from the Babylonian captivity. It is human nature that man should pride himself upon his ancestors and regard himself superior to one of lower ancestry. This claim to occupying a higher position than the people at large, because of being descendants of noble families, was fully recognized by the Babylonian captives. They freely submitted to the leadership of the members of the distinguished families. The same conditions prevailed after the return of the exiles to the land of their ancestors. The descendants of the old nobility still exercised authority over the people, and there is not the least indication that their rights to the position of leadership were ever questioned. This is quite natural. The people did recognize the hereditary right of Zerubabel to the supreme dignity of prince of Israel as scion of the Davidic royal family, and also the right of Joshua to the high-priestly dignity as descendant of the former high priests. And by the same token, the descendants of the former nobility could justly claim the privileges of their ancestors by right of heredity.

However, it was not only due to their hereditary rights that the people in the captivity willingly submitted to their authority. Born and raised in families that occupied leading positions among the people and thus being trained for positions of authority, they were more fit for leadership than others who did not possess such a training. Moreover we may rest assured that the members of the noble families on their return from the captivity rightly claimed the

former estates of their ancestors, and the governor of Judah did not reject their claim. Thus they were materially more prosperous than the people at large, and by virtue of their wealth were bound to become the leaders of their people. We see then that the post-exilic state was also based on the principle of inequality. Therefore corruption, injustice, and oppression of the poor were the natural consequences of such a system, notwithstanding the acceptance of the Mosaic laws by the returned exiles. The conditions would have been quite different, if the Judeans after the downfall of the state had broken completely with the past, and accepted the primitive order of their ancestors in the wilderness, by establishing absolute equality. The foundation of such a state would have been free from all the germs of corruption, and the ideals of the prophets with regard to the future state of Israel would have been realized. But the failure to do so was also due to foreign influence. In the countries of their captivity, the captives found inequality the basis of society, and it never occurred to them to question the soundness of such a system, though it was obvious that it was irreconcilable with the principles of Israel's religion.

But Ezekiel in formulating a new constitution for the future state of Israel ignores the existence of the nobility, as being contrary to the Mosaic principle of equality, upon which this state should be founded. However, loyalty to the Davidic dynasty was so deeply ingrained in his mind, that he did not abolish the institution of royalty, though not being quite in conformity with this principle, and royalty was bound to lead to the rise of a nobility. But it is noteworthy that the Babylonian anonymous prophet in his description of the restored state does not refer at all to the restoration of the Davidic dynasty, as he evidently saw in the establishment of a monarchy the germs of corruption. Nor does this prophet have any reference to a class of nobility in the future state. The same view was evidently

shared by the later spiritual leaders. To their opposition we may ascribe the fact that the house of David had not the least influence, as far as we know, after the passing of Zerubabel, and Judah became a Theocratic state, nominally at least. The prophet Hosea rightly saw the only salvation of Israel in their return to the wilderness, that is to say, in the restoration of the social conditions as they existed before the entrance of Israel into Canaan. He says: "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall respond there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt" (2.16-17).

If the remnant of Israel had been forced to sojourn in the wilderness, where survival was possible only by the efforts of each individual for all and all for one, such a primitive mode of life would have obliterated the different ranks and restored the conditions of equality, as is the case among all nomadic peoples. But Israel after the downfall of the state adopted the principle of inequality, which they found in all the countries of their captivity, and therefore continued to acknowledge the authority of their own nobility, the descendants of the very men who were the cause of the ruin of their state. This being so, post-exilic Israel had no reason to complain that the predictions of the prophets with regard to the greatness and the glory of the restored state had not been fulfilled. We have already pointed out that these predictions were of a conditional character. In predicting the grandeur of the future state of Israel, the prophets expected its establishment to conform to the prophetic ideals and the Mosaic laws. This could have been the case only if its fundament had been equality. How could they have become "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," if the very foundation upon which their new state was established was unsound and was bound to

lead to the same corrupt conditions that prevailed during the pre-exilic times? Post-exilic Israel had become merely nominally the people of Jahveh, and it was just that the independence of their new state should be merely of a nominal nature. The prophets expected the captives to be eager and enthusiastic to return to the land of their ancestors and to rebuild it. But as a matter of fact, the largest and best part among them had not the least desire to leave the countries of their captivity. They left the task of rebuilding the new state to the poorer classes. Did they act in accordance with the prophetic expectations? If the people did not fulfill the prophetic ideals, were they justified in expecting the fulfillment of the prophetic promises? In the establishment of the new state, the Judeans realized only a fraction of the prophetic ideals, and in the same measure only a fraction of the prophetic promises was fulfilled.

We have thus demonstrated that the prophetic ideal of equality as the fundament of the state was never realized even in post-exilic times. Yet if the people had not been void of understanding they must have perceived that a state founded on inequality, where the poor are without protection against the oppression of the wealthy classes, leads a precarious existence. It is even wrong to see in it a prophetic *ideal*. The demands of the prophets were also politically sound, and they showed the right kind of statesmanship. A state founded on aristocratic principles might endure for a long period, provided that its aristocracy is of a warlike nature and is able to defend the state against external enemies who are not superior to them in prowess and numbers. But their defense would be of no avail, if the aggressors are numerically stronger and more warlike or better armed or trained. The aristocrats may muster and arm the common people and thus oppose the enemies with a large army. But such an army will scarcely fight valiantly, if they believe that a victory would

not improve their conditions, and a defeat would not aggravate them. They will do their utmost only if they are convinced that the enemy, if victorious, would destroy or enslave them altogether. Otherwise, out of fear of their masters, they would show a semblance of resistance or attack, and seek their safety in flight or surrender, as soon as they could do so with impunity. Certainly they would not lay down their lives in defense of their native land, if such a sacrifice would merely serve to keep up the power of their oppressors and be of little or of no advantage to themselves. If, however, the aristocracy is not of a warlike nature or has become effeminate by luxury and debauchery, the independence of such a state has not the ghost of a chance of survival, in case of foreign aggression, and is inevitably doomed.

On the other hand, if a state is founded on democratic principles, where all inhabitants share equal rights, where every person without distinction of sex or age would be willing to sacrifice his life for the safety and independence of his fatherland, its inhabitants will either repulse the foreign aggressors or perish in defense of their freedom. They would be even ready to offer their lives for the aggrandizement of their country and enter upon a career of conquest. Moreover, religion was in all periods and is still the most effective force and the most powerful incentive in human affairs. People who firmly believe they have a religious mission entrusted to them by the deity are nigh invincible. Being firmly convinced that they are under divine protection, and that the deity fights in their very midst against their enemies, the courage of such people is nigh superhuman, and loss of life is of no consideration, if offered in honor of the deity. This is a truism; the pages of history are crowded with such instances.

Now during the activity of the prophets, Israel had actually become an aristocratic state, governed by the nobles and wealthy classes, where the poor had no share

and no vote in the affairs of the government and gradually were practically reduced to the condition of serfs. Their fields and houses were acquired by the nobles and wealthy. If the poor had no chance of holding their fields and houses as tenants, there was no other way for them to keep alive but to sell themselves as slaves to their wealthy brethren. That this was actually the case in ancient Israel is seen from the legislation in Exodus (21.2-6), Leviticus (25.39-55), and Deuteronomy (15.12-18). For the acquisition of the landed property of the poor by the wealthy classes during this period we have first the testimony of Isaiah who said: "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no room, and ye be made to dwell alone in the midst of the land" (5.8). The statement that those who acquired these properties were made to dwell alone in the midst of the land proves that these were no sporadic cases, but a general condition. Isaiah's contemporary Micah, in referring to the same conditions, expressed himself still more sharply, declaring that the rich people did not acquire these properties in an honest way but by trickery. He said: "Woe unto them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds. When the morning is light, they execute it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they covet fields, and seize them, and houses, and take them away; thus they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage" (2.1-2). This prophet describes also how the wealthy treated their debtors: "But of late My people has risen up as an enemy; with the garment ye strip also the mantle from them that pass by securely, so that they are as men returning from war. The women of My people ye cast out from their pleasant houses; from their young children ye take away My glory for ever" (2.8-9). If these deeds had been isolated cases, the prophets could not have condemned the whole country on account of the crimes of these wicked people. On the contrary the

good and honorable people who did not act in that way constituted an insignificant minority.

Both Isaiah and Micah leave no room for doubt that the oppression of the poor was general among the ruling classes. So Isaiah expressed himself: "The Lord will enter into judgment with the elders of his people and the princes thereof: 'It is ye that have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses; what mean ye that ye crush My people, and grind the face of the poor?' saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts" (3.14-15). He actually denounced all ruling classes without distinction: "Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves; every one loveth bribes, and followeth after rewards; they judge not the fatherless, nor doth the cause of a widow come unto them" (1.23). A similar description of the corrupt practices during this period we find in Micah: "Their hands are upon that which is evil to do it diligently; the prince asketh, and the judge is ready for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth the evil desire of his soul; thus they weave it together" (7.3). We have further testimony from the prophets that the wealthy classes had become intemperate and debauched, and such a mode of life could not but make them effeminate. Its consequence was that, in case of foreign aggression, they were far from being warlike, unable to repulse by their own prowess the invasion of their land by enemies. So Isaiah bitterly denounced their intemperate habits: "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that tarry late into the night, that wine may inflame them! And the harp, and the psaltery, the tabret and the pipe, and wine, are in their feasts" (5.11-12). Further "Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink" (5.22). The prophet may have meant it ironically: They show themselves heroes at their drinking bouts in demonstrating that they were able to drink large quantities of strong drink without becoming intoxi-

cated; but will they prove themselves heroes in the face of an enemy?

It stands to reason that such a debauched nobility could do nothing to defend the state against foreign aggression. Surely the nobility of other countries was no better and may have been even worse than that of Israel. But in a country like Egypt, the effeminate condition of the nobility did not wholly endanger the existence of the state, as Egypt was rich enough to have a mercenary army at its disposal for the defense of the country. This was of course far from being an ideal state of affairs, as the country was at the mercy of the foreign mercenaries and was only nominally independent. If the mercenaries felt themselves strong enough they overthrew the native Dynasty, and their chieftain founded a new Dynasty, as often happened. The existence of other states which were too poor to hire foreign mercenaries for their protection was just as precarious as that of Judah. The fact that so many states in the Near East fell an easy prey to Assyria, may not have been so much due to the prowess of the Assyrian warriors, their training, and their superior armaments, as to the aristocratic constitutions of these states. The Assyrians had to contend only with the nobility, while the people at large consisting of the poor were more or less indifferent defenders of their states and fought only half-heartedly. There is good reason for the assumption that the Assyrians were well aware of this fact, and shaped their policy in accordance with it, treating the poor classes with more consideration, while pouring out their whole fury on the leading classes. The impression of this treatment on the poor of the neighboring states was to make them still more reluctant to oppose the Assyrian conquerors. They were not treated worse by the Assyrian governors than by their own petty tyrants, if not better. And it is human nature to bear more patiently the oppressive yoke of a foreign tyrant than that of their own blood-relations.

If we may judge from Sargon's treatment of Samaria who carried off into captivity 27,290 inhabitants, young and old, men and women, though the country must have numbered at least a million of inhabitants, we may certainly conclude that only the leading classes had been carried off, while the poor were left behind and placed under Assyrian governors. It would not be far-fetched to assume that under Assyrian rule these people were better off than formerly, when their state was governed by their own rulers and was nominally independent. While the Assyrians were ruthless destroyers of their opponents, it was a matter of policy with them to keep these peasants content, as they were a continual source of taxes, and a lenient treatment insured their loyalty. Who knows whether the oppressed poor of Judah did not look with envy upon the conditions of their brethren in Samaria under Assyrian rule? The prophetic denunciations quoted above are of such a character that we could not imagine the conditions to have been worse in Samaria under the rule of the Assyrians.

The Second Book of Chronicles (30.1-12) records that Hezekiah sent messengers and letters to the people of Samaria, inviting them to come to Jerusalem and participate in the celebration of Passover. This invitation reads: "Ye children of Israel, turn back unto the Lord . . . that He may return to the remnant that are escaped of you out of the hand of the kings of Assyria. And be not like your fathers, and like your brethren, who acted treacherously against the Lord, the God of their fathers, so that He delivered them to be an astonishment, as ye see. Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the Lord, and enter into His sanctuary, etc." But it is stated there: "So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun; but *they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.*" There is no reason to doubt the historicity of this record, as it

was good policy on the part of Hezekiah, who intended to throw off the Assyrian suzerainty and to form a West Semitic confederacy against Assyria, as he did, to fraternize with the Ephraimites. But if they had suffered under the Assyrian rule, we may seriously doubt whether they were so light-hearted as to laugh and mock at this invitation. People in a desperate condition will try anything to alleviate their sufferings. They would have listened with mixed feelings of doubt and hope to these exhortations, and would not have laughed them to scorn. This may be taken as a further confirmation that the poor left in the country of Samaria did not find themselves in a worse condition than formerly under their own rulers. They naturally laughed on hearing that their present subjection to Assyria was a punishment for their faithlessness to the God of their ancestors, since they were supposed to suffer without knowing it. Hezekiah, however, did not know their circumstances, judging them from his own point of view, and believed that they deeply mourned for the downfall of their state and the loss of their independence.

Seeing that the leading classes were too effeminate, because of their way of living in luxury and debauchery, to ward off foreign aggression, the downfall of the state was imminent, if the Assyrians should demand a tribute larger than the Judeans would be in a position to pay, or if Assyria for political reasons should abolish its nominal independence. The people at large would have constituted a half-hearted force for its defense. However, history has often shown that a small number of people of no military training and with primitive weapons were able to defeat a large army, if inspired by a religious idea and believing they were executing a divine commission, as we have already pointed out. If the wealthy classes had been deeply imbued with the religious idea that they were fighting the battles of Jahveh, they still might have been able to defend the state even against a powerful enemy, notwith-

standing their defects and numerical weakness. But such a strong religious feeling could not be expected of men of this type.

There is a remarkable parallel to the condition of Judah. Similar causes lead independently to similar conditions. It is a mere coincidence that the same social conditions which existed in Judah during the 8th and 7th centuries existed also in Athens during the 7th century. Here also the hereditary nobility deprived the common people of all their political rights. Here also the administration of law was in the hands of the nobility, and injustice was the consequence. Assisted by their judicial control, the aristocracy tended to become sole owners of the land, reducing thereby the original freeholders or tenants to the position of serfs. Here also the common people were in debt to the wealthy, and this financial distress was steadily driving many of the agricultural population into slavery. This threatened the entire state of Athens with ruin. Thus as far as the corrupt conditions were concerned, we have a complete parallel. But here the parallel ends. The Athenian aristocracy, as soon as they were faced with the ruin of the commonwealth, gave to one of their peers, Solon, free power to re-model the whole state. By his economic legislation, Solon placed Athenian agriculture once more upon a sound footing, and gradually the state of Athens was based on a democratic system. It was chiefly due to its fundamental change of constitution, that Athens was able to defend its independence against the most formidable power in antiquity, the Persian empire, and developed into an empire. This change was effected without a cataclysm and with very little bloodshed. It was due to the good sense of the aristocracy and to their love of their native state to perceive that they must either renounce their hereditary rights or see the downfall of their state. Such an eventuality would have meant inevitable subjection to one of the neighboring states and the complete loss of their independ-

ence. Facing these two calamities, the loss of their special privileges or of their political rights, they naturally preferred the minor evil of being ready to renounce their ruling position.

We may notice by way of digression that in the fortunes of Athens we have one of the great religious lessons in history. There is a rabbinical saying: "God does not withhold the reward of any being." This may truly be applied to the Athenian state. Notwithstanding that they were polytheists, the Athenians established their commonwealth on the principles of justice and righteousness, where high or low, poor or rich, enjoyed equal rights. They fully received their reward. Athens was able to defend its independence against the mightiest empire of antiquity. It established the principles of democracy upon which it was based in the Ionian city-states of Asia Minor and in Greece. They willingly submitted to its hegemony, and thereby it established a powerful empire. It carried its arms into foreign parts and founded colonies where it settled its surplus population. The nobility, though no longer possessing special privileges, still maintained its leading position, and the people willingly entrusted them with the management of the political affairs in war and peace, as long as they showed themselves capable and acted in accordance with the will of the people. As servants of the state they were its real rulers. Thus also the nobility received their reward in full for their submission to the principles of justice and righteousness. Athens became the seat of art and science that excited the admiration of antiquity and posterity, and in these fields became the founder of present civilization. It achieved this greatness, though it did not possess a prophet like the Second Isaiah who promised it all these glories as reward for its righteousness. Its greatness endured as long as it adhered to these principles. Its downfall from its high state began when it had become oppressive to its allies and subjects and disregarded their rights. In fact, the

whole of Athens turned into an aristocracy and its allies and subjects played the part of common people without rights. They turned against it and deprived it of its leading position. Henceforth it became a hotbed of discord, demagoguery, and injustice toward its leaders who did not cater to the vanity of its misguided citizens. Having become the seat of learning, it still maintained the same position, in deference to tradition, but it was merely the shadow of its former greatness. It had no longer any future as a political power and lived upon the glories of its past. In the vicissitudes of this state we have an historical instance which shows the truth of the words of Isaiah: "Say ye of the righteous, that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for the work of his hands shall be done to him" (3.10-11).

From this historical instance we can see that the demands of Israel's prophets to establish the state on the principles of justice and righteousness were easy of realization and did not endanger its existence, if the leading classes in Israel had possessed as much understanding as those of Athens to realize that the prevailing conditions must inevitably lead to the ruin of the state. There is no historical record to the effect that an attempt had been made during the 8th and 7th centuries to improve the social conditions, which were in every respect as bad as those of Athens about the same period. It was only after the first captivity, in 597, under the reign of Zedekiah, that some attempt was made to abolish one of the worst consequences of the system of inequality, the enslaving of the poor, who were enslaved by their own brethren. From Jeremiah we know that this king made a covenant with the people to restore liberty to these Hebrew slaves (Jer. 34.8-22). This was not due to a religious impulse, but was forced upon the people by the fear of the imminent war. The Assyrian policy of carrying into captivity the leading classes and

leaving the poor at home to cultivate the land was continued by Nebuchadnezzar. This he did in the first captivity which consisted only of the leading classes, though he left a large number behind as supporters of Zedekiah whom he placed upon the throne of Judah. It is very likely that those deported were suspected of belonging to the pro-Egyptian partisans. But it was a foregone conclusion that if there should be another deportation, it would affect only the leading classes, while the poor would be left behind. This actually happened after the destruction of Jerusalem: "But Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, left of the poor of the people that had nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them fields and vineyards in the same day" (Jer. 39.10). We may rest assured that most of the people "who had nothing" consisted of the former slaves. It is reasonable that these slaves should have looked upon the Chaldean conqueror as their liberator from the yoke of slavery. They would not have had the least hesitation in deserting the cause of their own state and going over to the enemy. The only way of preventing such a desertion was to give these slaves their freedom. However, the liberated slaves could not live on their liberty alone, without possessing some property to gain their sustenance by cultivating the soil. Should they not have asked on being given their liberty: On what shall we live, seeing that we have nothing? Though there is no record to that effect, we may read between the lines, that on their liberation, they were promised not only fields and all necessary implements for cultivation of the soil, but also sustenance till they would be in a position to live on the fruit of their labors. Jeremiah is silent on this promise, and rightly so. Why should he have referred to it, seeing that the wealthy classes committed the abominable crime of breaking this covenant soon after and forcing the liberated slaves into their former state of slavery?

The covenant to free the slaves was made when the

Chaldean army went up against Judah. The date given in the heading of chapter 34 is no doubt also of the second section of this chapter that deals with the liberation of the slaves. This heading reads: "The word which came unto Jeremiah from the Lord, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his army, and all the kingdoms of the land of his dominion, and all the peoples fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities thereof" (34.1). The danger of the downfall of the state seemed imminent, and this was the only reason for liberating their slaves in order to ensure their loyalty. It stands to reason that the freed slaves promised on their part to fight valiantly against the invaders. In giving them full franchise, Zedekiah was in a position of mustering a large army against the Chaldeans. Having become equal citizens, these freemen had no longer any reason for espousing the cause of the Chaldeans and thereby losing their independence.

Now the Judeans firmly relied upon the help of Egypt, which indeed made a serious attempt to come to their relief, as we know from Jeremiah (37.5): "And Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt; and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem heard tidings of them they broke up from Jerusalem." But it is not stated whether the Chaldeans went to meet the Egyptian army or retreated toward the north. We only know that the Egyptian army turned back to their country (37.7). It is possible that they retreated because they feared to meet the Chaldean power, or it may have been the consequence of the retreat of the latter. Their only aim was to relieve Judah, and this was achieved as soon as the Chaldeans withdrew from Judah. The Judeans of course attributed the retreat of the Chaldeans to their fear of meeting the Egyptian army and were convinced that the danger was past. There was no longer any apprehension that their slaves would make common cause with the Chaldeans, and under this impression they forced these freemen back into servitude. But Jeremiah

was better informed about the retreat of the Chaldeans, knowing that it was only temporary or a strategical move, saying: "Behold, Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt into their own land. And the Chaldeans shall return, and fight against this city; and they shall take it, and burn it with fire. Thus saith the Lord: Deceive not yourselves, saying: The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us; for they shall not depart" (37.7-9).

Now if Jeremiah had not recorded this fact that the wealthy classes forced the liberated slaves back into slavery, we would scarcely believe that the Judeans were capable of committing such a detestable infamy that has scarcely a parallel in history. There are innumerable instances of kings and states proclaiming constitutions and breaking them. But the perpetration of such a dastardly act of freeing slaves, in a solemn covenant, in the sanctuary, before the Godhead, and enslaving them again, we would not expect to find even among low barbarians. However, we may suppose that the wealthy classes who did it were not so devoid of all decency as to commit such an awful act without justifying it by some reason. They may have claimed that the granting of liberty to their slaves was dependent on the condition that they should help defend the country and thereby present a united front to the invaders, but since the enemy had withdrawn, the act of the covenant was based on false premises and was therefore void. Looking back upon these events, we stand appalled at this wickedness, this cruelty, and this dishonorable conduct of the nobility of Judah. Jeremiah refers only to the leading classes, which were the owners of large estates. There was scarcely a middle class left. The poorer classes that still possessed some landed property did not own slaves, as the fruit of their fields yielded hardly enough for their own sustenance.

This breaking of the covenant was an unprecedented crime, and in the same measure deserved an unprecedented

punishment. Jeremiah was not too severe in proclaiming in the name of the Lord: "Ye have not hearkened unto Me, to proclaim liberty, every man to his brother, and every man to his neighbour; behold, I proclaim for you a liberty, saith the Lord, unto the sword, unto the pestilence, and unto the famine; and I will make you a horror unto all the kingdoms of the earth. And I will give the men that have transgressed My covenant, that have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before Me . . . ; I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that seek their life; and their dead bodies shall be for food unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth" (34.17-20). Of special interest in Jeremiah's denunciation is his testimony that the laws of slavery date from the Mosaic period and were a part of the covenant that the Lord made with Israel, and his statement that they never had been observed: "Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel: I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying: 'At the end of seven years ye shall let go every man his brother that is a Hebrew, that hath been sold unto thee, and hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee'; but your fathers hearkened not unto Me, neither inclined their ear" (34.13-14). What is true of the laws of slavery may hold good for many other biblical ordinances. If we find that they were not observed in pre-exilic times, we must not jump to the conclusion that they did not exist and that they date from an exilic or post-exilic period.

Now it might seem strange that the lower classes which constituted the overwhelming majority of the people should have willingly submitted to the tyranny of the nobility and should not have made an attempt to overthrow them. However, the same question might be raised concerning all countries based on an aristocratic system, where

almost identical conditions prevailed. Even Athens is no exception. There also the change was not effected by the rise of the masses overthrowing the nobility. It was due, as we have seen, to the ruling class that was able to read the handwriting on the wall. However, it must be freely admitted that there is no evidence that the nobility of any other country, be it in antiquity or in mediaeval times, was guilty of such a heinous crime as that recorded by Jeremiah of the nobility of Judah. But this must not be taken as if all of the nobility without exception had broken this covenant. Jeremiah seems to have qualified his denunciation, in saying: "And I will give *the men that have transgressed My covenant*," and from this expression we may well gather that there were among them some who did not transgress it. Surely we cannot imagine Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the later governor of Judah, and his whole family, that were so closely connected with Jeremiah (26.24), to have been among these transgressors. So also we may rest assured that the priests, who were also among those who participated in the covenant (34.19) and must have owned slaves and freed them, did not break the covenant either. Nor does Jeremiah charge the king with this crime. As a matter of fact, he was a pious king in every respect and would have willingly submitted to the advice of Jeremiah (37.17; 38.14-26), but he was helpless in the hands of the nobility, as Jeremiah testifies.

Furthermore, we must keep in mind that the nobility left behind in Judah after the first captivity consisted of the worst elements of the ruling classes. A large part of them were not only corrupt and immoral but no longer believed in the power of Jahveh, as formerly. There was good reason for their unbelief. Formerly they considered it inconceivable that "an adversary and an enemy should enter into the gates of Jerusalem." After the first captivity, they lost their confidence that Jahveh was able to protect the center of His cult and the sanctuary upon which His

name was called. Consequently they became idolators. An oath by the name of the Lord was of little consequence in their eyes, and in their own conscience they did not feel it binding. We may assume that the largest part of those who transgressed this covenant consisted of people of that type. This is by no means far-fetched. People of that kind existed already in former days. From the prophet Zephaniah (1.5) we know that there were people in his days that did not put any trust in an oath by Jahveh, if it was not re-asserted by an oath by Milcom. This does not mean that all the Judeans were worshippers of Milcom. But in a transaction in which an oath is required one likes to be on the safe side, and it was uncertain whether the other party to this transaction was a worshipper of Jahveh or of Milcom, and therefore a double oath was required in which both divine names were invoked. It is indeed quite natural that a debauched nobility, as a rule, should have preferred the worship of other gods who were of a licentious character to that of Jahveh. Many of those who made this covenant may have made it with the mental reservation of breaking it, if there should come a change of circumstances, since an oath in the name of Jahveh was not binding for them at all.

The supposition that the people who transgressed the covenant were apostates who no longer believed in Jahveh and served other gods is not a vague suggestion. We have the unimpeachable testimony of the prophet Ezekiel that this was actually a fact, during this period under the reign of Zedekiah, that the leading men of Judah practiced idolatry and had lost all trust in the power of Jahveh. He tells that in a vision he was brought to Jerusalem into the Temple, and there he found the elders of Judah offering incense to idols, while others were worshipping the sun, and women were weeping for the god Tammuz (8.9-12, 14, 16). He clearly states that these people belonged to the ruling classes: "Then He said unto me: 'Son of man, hast

thou seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in his chamber of imagery? for they say: The Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the Land'” (8.12). But why did they do it in secret and not openly? Zedekiah was certainly powerless to prevent it, and there must have been some reason why the nobility could not practice idolatry openly, as in former days. Now the great disaster that befell Jerusalem with the captivity of Jehoiachin along with the best part of the Judean population and the plunder of the Temple (II Kings 24.12-16) must have affected the common people differently than the nobility. The latter, as we observed, lost thereby their belief in Jahveh altogether. The common people, however, may have rejoiced at the calamity of the ruling class, seeing the largest part of their oppressors carried into captivity. Should they not have seen in it the visible hand of the Lord punishing them for their oppression of the poor and their injustice toward them? In the captivity they would now feel all the miseries of the poor and their privations. In getting rid of such a large number of their oppressors, they hoped for better times to come. And it is very likely that the social conditions were greatly improved with their removal. The tenants who lived on their estates may not have been compelled to pay the rents, though a good many of the captives may have given a power of attorney to their friends and relations to receive the payment of rents from their tenants. We may thus assume that the common people were grateful to the Lord for having freed them from a large number of their oppressors and became more or less faithful worshippers of the God of Israel. Jeremiah may have played a very important part in the conversion of the people. They have seen that his predictions had been fulfilled. They were more amenable to correction than the debauched nobility. The priests and priestly prophets, who saw in this calamity a divine punishment, likewise exhorted the people to re-

turn to the God of Israel. Under such conditions, if the nobility wanted to keep their position as the ruling class, they were forced to submit to the current fashion, in pretending to be faithful worshippers of Jahveh, but they still continued to practice idolatry secretly, "in the dark, every one in his chamber of imagery."

There is evidence for our suggestion that during the reign of Zedekiah the idolatrous practices ceased among the common people. From Jeremiah we know that the Judeans, who after the murder of Gedaliah immigrated into Egypt, practiced idolatry there. When the prophet threatened them with the wrath of the Lord on account of their apostasy, they replied: "As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly perform every word that is gone forth out of our mouth, to offer unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem; for then had we plenty of food, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to offer to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine" (44.16-18). This answer, as the context shows, was given by the women. "The queen of heaven" is of course Astarte, the goddess of agriculture, fertility, and prostitution, the consort of Baal, and women officiated as her priestesses. In Egypt she was identified with Isis, and her worship could be continued there. It seems that the people of Judah were more addicted to the worship of Astarte than to that of Baal. Therefore nothing is said there about the worship of Baal by the men, though he could be identified with Osiris, or with one of the other Egyptian deities.

Now in their answer to Jeremiah, the women stated that "they left off to offer to the queen of heaven." To what

period did they refer? They certainly did not refer to the reign of Josiah. They could not have said that under his reign they were consumed by the sword and by the famine, as Jeremiah testifies that the country was well under his reign (22.15-16). Nor could they have meant the reign of Jehoiakim, as during this period they were worshipping the queen of heaven, as Jeremiah states: "The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead the dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto other gods" (7.18). Therefore if there is any period during which the people ceased to worship other gods, it must be that of Zedekiah, after the first captivity. As a matter of fact, while Jeremiah during the reign of Jehoiakim charged the Judeans with worship of other gods (2.27-28; 7.9; 8.2; 10.2-15; 11.13; 13.10; 16.11-12; 19.3-5; 22.9), we do not find such a charge in his utterances under the reign of Zedekiah, though there is occasionally a reference to idolatrous practices in the past (32.34-35; 35.15). This prophet may well have known of the nobility's idolatrous practices in secret. But he was in a different position from Ezekiel. He could not raise accusations which he could not prove, if he did not want to be condemned to death. He had to walk circumspectly with the ruling classes, who were seeking his life. Ezekiel, however, in the captivity could speak as freely as the spirit moved him. His fellow-captives had no power over him to demand proofs of his accusations.

Ezekiel identified the elders of Israel, whom he saw in his vision in the Temple, as the representatives of the leading classes and accused them in general of idolatrous practices in secret. They naturally had to accept the covenant of freeing the slaves proposed by Zedekiah. The aristocrats could not have declared frankly that a covenant in the name of Jahveh was for them without any obligation. Nor could they have given this reason for breaking the covenant. Thus from a religious point of view, their conscience did

not trouble them for having done an irreligious act. As far as the humane point was concerned, in having committed such a cruel act against the members of their own people, oppression of the poor was for the aristocrats a privilege of their class, and it is natural that they should not feel compunction for such a deed. We may reasonably assume that the slaves whom they had so bitterly disappointed took full vengeance on them at the destruction of Jerusalem, and willingly assisted the Chaldeans in their extermination. It is very likely that they did the same in the towns of Judah during the siege. Zedekiah was more afraid of the Judeans who deserted to the Chaldeans than of the latter. When Jeremiah advised him to surrender to Nebuchadnezzar to save his life and that of his family, he answered him: "I am afraid of the Judeans that are fallen away to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hands, and they mock me" (38.19). There must have been instances known to him, in which they treated cruelly the nobles who fell into their hands. Jeremiah may have been right in assuring him that they would not deliver him (38.20). But even if they had delivered him, it is not likely that they would have ill-treated him. He deserved more pity than censure, and this was generally known. The Chaldean partisans may have despised him for his weakness and cowardice, but they had no reason for hating him. That Jeremiah deeply pitied him can be seen from the divine message that he delivered to him: "But hear the word of the Lord, O Zedekiah, king of Judah: Thus saith the Lord concerning thee: Thou shalt not die by the sword; thou shalt die in peace; and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings that were before thee, so shall they make a burning for thee; and they shall lament thee: 'Ah lord!' " (34.4-5). How different was this message from that to Jehoiakim! This reads: "They shall not lament for him: 'Ah my brother!' or: 'Ah sister!' They shall not lament for him: 'Ah lord!' or: 'Ah his glory!' He

shall be buried with the burial of an ass drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem" (22.18-19).

There is another instance of the inhumanity of the leading classes of Judah during the reign of Zedekiah. They were cruel not only toward the slaves and the poor whom they regarded as dirt under their feet but also toward their own peers. We learn this also from Ezekiel. When the prophet saw in his vision one of the leaders falling dead, he thought that the same would happen to all other leaders assembled there in the Temple. This would have been symbolic for the entire destruction of Israel. Therefore the prophet at once interceded with the Lord, exclaiming: "O Lord God, wilt Thou make an end of the remnant of Israel?" (11.13). But the Lord replied to the prophet's intercession: It is wrong to look upon the people that remained in Judah as "the remnant of Israel." Their disappearance does not mean the end of Israel. Thy real true brethren that constitute "the house of Israel," are "the men of thy *captivity*." The prophet expressed thereby the idea, which became fundamental in Judaism, that Israel is not united by race but by religion: Only the Israelites who are loyal to the Lord and His commandments belong to "the house of Israel," while the others who are disloyal are cut off from "the congregation of the Lord." In this answer of the Lord to his intercession he was told: The people for which thou canst and shouldst intercede, which constitute "the whole house of Israel" are those concerning whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem say: "They are far away from the Lord; unto us is this land given for a possession" (11.13-15).

We have seen that according to this prophet's testimony, the leading classes of Judah were secretly addicted to idolatrous practices, while conducting themselves publicly as worshippers of the God of Israel. When it suited their nefarious purposes, they claimed authority for their deeds in the name of the fundamental belief of Israel as repre-

sentatives of the people of Jahveh. We have already dwelt upon the fact that it was the general conception in pre-exilic times that Jahveh's dominion was restricted to His own territory, and He was without power outside of the land of Israel. In conformity with this principle, if a member of the house of Israel left his native land, he had no longer a share in the inheritance of the Lord and lost thereby his hereditary possessions. We may well suppose that after a lapse of a certain period, perhaps seven years, the possession reverted to the next-of-kin of the absent owners. The people carried into Babylonian captivity with Jehoiachim belonged for the most part to the distinguished families, and there can scarcely be room for doubt that almost all of them had been owners of landed property. It is natural that they should not have had any chance of disposing of it before their departure from the country. They expected their tenants to pay rent which could easily have been transmitted to them in Babylonia. We have said that a good many of the deported people gave a power of attorney to their relatives or friends to collect for them their rents. But the leading classes that remained in the land claimed these estates as their own possessions, contending that owners who were far away from the Lord have no right to possess property in His land. The captives were thereby deprived of their possessions by virtue of Israel's current belief and by the authority of Jahveh as Israel's national God.

Thus the nobles of Judah showed themselves merciless toward their own class in captivity who might perish from want in a foreign country. Most of the captives belonging to the nobility were not used to manual labor, and must have led a precarious existence during the first years of their captivity, until they became acclimated to the new surroundings and learned the language and the habits of the native population. Ezekiel himself may have been in a more favorable position. If he possessed any estate at

home, we may rest assured that his next-of-kin among the priests of Jerusalem took proper care of it and remitted to him the rent. If he did not possess any property, they did not let him starve either, but generously supported him. It is not without reason that in all his denunciations, he had no word of reproach against the priests. He certainly would have included them in his condemnations, if he had found any wrong in their conduct. On the contrary, in his priestly ordinances, he distinctly declared them to have been always faithful ministers unto the Lord and never strayed away from Him, in following the conduct of the people: "But the priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of My sanctuary, when the children of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near to Me, to minister unto Me" (44.15). Thus though predicting destruction for the inhabitants of Judah, he could not have meant to say that the priests would suffer the same fate.

The saying that there is no rule without exception must be applied also to Ezekiel's condemnations of the leading classes of Judah. Not all of them were of such a wicked type. Some of them may well have taken good care of the estates of the captives and faithfully remitted to them their income, and these men did not suffer from want in the captivity. This was evidently the case of the elders of Israel who occupied leading positions among the captives and often came to Ezekiel to consult him on the affairs of the community (14.1; 20.1). They seem to have been men of leisure, and devoted it to the management of the affairs of their brethren. But most of the other captives who did not know any profession had a hard struggle for existence on account of the cruelty of their brethren in Judah who deprived them of their properties. Surely people of such a cruel disposition did not deserve any mercy, nor the intercession of the prophet. He naturally condemned the attitude of the Judeans who claimed that the captives were far away from the Lord.

The Universalistic principle, that the Lord resides everywhere, must have been the very fundament of Ezekiel's teachings, as otherwise he could not have proclaimed himself as the prophet of the Lord, if He had no power outside of the land of Israel. Surely the prophet himself, in exclaiming: "Wilt Thou make a complete end of the remnant of Israel?" relapsed into the erroneous conception of the people who believed that the only representatives of Israel were those dwelling in the inheritance of the Lord. But it often happens in everyday affairs that people do not act in accordance with religious doctrines. Though post-exilic Judaism is based on religion and not upon race, persons who disregard openly all ritual observances are very rarely excluded from membership in Jewish congregations, and this could be ascribed only to racial affinity. Theoretically we may proclaim sublime ideals, but under stress of circumstances we are unable to comply with them. Even God-inspired prophets share this human trait and cannot completely free themselves from current conceptions in which they formerly believed. As a matter of fact, this Universalistic principle is almost irreconcilable with the prophetic conception with regard to the holiness of the land of Israel and the sanctuary of Jerusalem as the residence of Jahveh. But there is a rabbinical rule that "traditional usage cancels a law." If habit is second nature, and man is almost powerless against it, this must hold good also of the habit of thought. Though the prophets insisted upon the Universal nature of Jahveh, they merely proclaimed Him as the Ruler of the Universe, but still held, in accordance with their traditional conception, that the seat of His residence was the land of Israel, and that the place of his worship was the Temple of Jerusalem.

We have already referred to the rabbinical saying, that the celestial kingdom is like a terrestrial kingdom. This comparison holds true also of the Universalistic conception of Jahveh's nature. If a king were able to enlarge his

small principality into a mighty empire, he would not forsake his former capital. If he did, it would be base ingratitude on his part. He would rather rebuild it and make it the most magnificent city of his empire, and would heap honors and riches on the natives of his former small principality, who assisted him to achieve such a high position. May not the same be expected of Jahveh? Formerly He was the God of a small nation, and was practically unknown outside of His small principality. If He did achieve general recognition as the Lord of the Universe, was this achievement not exclusively due to Israel or their spiritual leaders? Was it not Israel that suffered untold martyrdoms for the glorification and recognition of His name? If there had not been a faithful remnant of Israel, would He have become known among the nations of the earth? Would it not have been the basest ingratitude on His part, from a human point of view, to abandon Israel and their land, to forsake His former sanctuary and to take up His abode among other nations which would not have known of His existence but for Israel? Should He not shower glory and honors on the warriors who fought His battles and willingly laid down their lives for His glorification? Was it not an act of justice to make their land and sanctuary glorious among the nations? This was the conception of the prophets in reserving for Israel and their land an exceptionally exalted position in the future kingdom of God. When His name would be recognized by all the nations of the earth. This conception was based upon Divine justice and was absolutely in conformity with the Universalistic principle.

The misconception of the Universalistic principle of the prophets is due to modern ideas concerning the essence of the Godhead which modern scholars project into antiquity and thereby investigate the prophetic utterances from a present-day thought. Unconsciously they do not draw a line between Nature and the God of Nature and

confound this Universalistic principle with Divine Omnipresence. And if so, God could not be more in one place than in another place. This would naturally exclude the idea of a special residence of the Lord. But was this the conception of the prophets? The idea of Omnipresence is certainly found in Isaiah's theophany, in the song of the Seraphim: "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory" (6.3). It is also found in the Pentateuch, where it is said: "and all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord" (Num. 14.21). But the glory of the Lord must not be confounded with His personality. Notwithstanding the idea of Omnipresence announced by the Seraphim, Isaiah beheld a Personal God sitting upon a high and uplifted throne. This was Isaiah's conception shared by all the prophets. A Personal God may well reside in Israel, while His glory fills the whole earth.

Thus Ezekiel's Universalistic principle was not contrary to his belief in the land of Israel as being the residence of the Lord and in the sanctuary of Jerusalem as the place of His worship. If this prophet nevertheless beheld a theophany outside of the land of Israel, it was because of the land having been defiled by the abominations of its inhabitants, and for the time being was no longer a fit place to be the residence of the Lord. He could thus reside anywhere, until His former residence would become again a place proper for His habitation. Now in Ezekiel's second theophany (8-11), it is clearly told that the Lord had withdrawn first from the temple and then from Jerusalem (9.3; 10.4, 18, 19; 11.23). But no explanation is given in the first theophany (1.1-28) for the strange phenomenon that Ezekiel should have beheld the glory of the Lord outside of the land of Israel. It almost seems that the purpose of the second theophany was to explain this phenomenon. His fellow captives may have doubted the reality of his theophany in objecting that Ezekiel could not have

beheld the vision of God in Babylonia, seeing that the land of Israel was the only residence of the Lord. Therefore the second theophany occurred to show that the Lord had left His former residence, and for the present might reside anywhere. But if the Lord should choose a residence outside of Israel's land, it was natural that He should prefer to reside among His own worshippers in captivity.

The sacred character of the Temple of Jerusalem was due to the presence of the Lord residing therein. Thus any place where the Lord resides becomes automatically His residence and a sanctuary. No building is required for such a purpose, as the Lord Himself constitutes the sanctuary. Therefore the prophet replied to the Judeans who said that the captives were far from the Lord: "Thus saith the Lord God: Although I have removed them far off among the nations, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet I shall be unto them a sanctuary, *for a little while*, in the countries where they are come" (11.16). However, if Ezekiel himself believed in the sanctity of the land of Israel, he could not have condemned the Judeans for saying that the captives were far away from the Lord. If they did appropriate the estates of the captives, it would have been cruel from a human point of view, but legally, they could not be blamed. Justice is often cruel, in forcing a poor man to pay his debts to people who live in affluence and are in no need of this payment. But the crime of the wealthy classes of Judah consisted of claiming the estates in the name of Jahveh in whom they did not believe and to whom they were faithless, worshipping other gods. Their plea was mere pretense and hypocrisy to place in their hands the property of the captives. They were wicked toward God and man. When they served idols, they justified it by saying: "The Lord seeth us not, the Lord hath forsaken the land" (8.12). But for the robbing of the captives they used the contrary plea, that the Lord is among them, "and the captives were far

away from Him" (11.15). These two instances of perfidy committed by the wealthy classes of Judah, freeing the slaves by a solemn covenant and enslaving them again, and depriving the captives of their hereditary estates, for which we have the testimony of the two contemporary prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel, show how godless and inhuman they were. We have no reason for supposing that their fathers and ancestors were different from them. If corruption goes hand in hand with prosperity, their predecessors were certainly more prosperous than the nobility in the last years of the Judean state.

CHAPTER V

The prosperity of Israel and Judah—The accession of Tiglathpileser IV—The Western confederacy against Assyria—Judah not a member of this confederacy—Menahem's submission to Assyria—The condition of Israel—The rebellion against Menahem—The geographical position of Tiphshah—The people's approval of Zechariah's murder—Menahem's cruel treatment of the rebels—The reason for Menahem's joining the confederacy—The confirmation of his kingdom by Assyria—The consequence of his defection—The years of his reign—The murder of Pekahiah—The feud between the two Joseph-tribes Ephraim and Manasseh—Pekah's precarious condition as the murderer of Pekahiah—His alliance with Rezin king of Aram—Their intention to revive the Western confederacy—Judah's refusal to join them—The social conditions of Israel compared with those of Judah—The effect of dynastic changes—The military system of Assyria—The change of dynasties in North-Israel—The long duration of the Jehu-dynasty—The denunciation of the nobility by Amos—Israel being in more need of his activity than Judah—Hosea's views of Judah—Menahem's new nobility—The permanency of Judah's nobility—Judah's caste-system—*The Am-Haareṣ*—The aliens in Judah—Their religion—Their treatment—Their influence—The mercenaries in Judah—The Carians—Their assistance at the overthrow of Athaliah—Arabian mercenaries—Hezekiah's "pious warriors"—The Rechabites—The foreign priests—The etymology of *Kōmer*—The term Chaldean—The Philistine oracles—The belief in foreign soothsayers an economic problem—The engagement of foreign diviners—The separate functions of the *Kohanim* and *Kemarim*—An illustration of their positions.

THE prosperity of the states of Israel and Judah under the reigns of the allied kings Jeroboam II and Uzziah, for about forty years (780-740), was due to two causes. The first cause was the decline of the power of Assyria, after the death of Adad-nirari IV (781). Assyria during this period did not undertake any campaign against the West. But of still greater importance was the second cause: the defeat of Damascus by Adad-nirari. This defeat and the immense tribute that it had to pay weakened this hereditary enemy of Israel to such an extent that it fell an easy

prey to the united forces of Israel and Judah. But toward the end of this period, Assyria recovered its strength, and the Western states, and among them also Israel and Judah, were in danger of losing their independence. In the year 745 a warrior of great ability and severity ascended the throne of Assyria under the name of Tiglathpileser IV. After conquering Babylonia and the Eastern countries, this king marched toward the West with the avowed purpose of making these countries tributary to Assyria, and of destroying them in case of resistance. The first Western state attacked was Arpad, in the year 742. This city must have been a formidable fortress and well defended, since its siege lasted two years. This city fell in 740. It seems that its fall coincided with the death of both kings, Uzziah and Jeroboam II.

The fall of Arpad and of another Western state Unki showed that the danger was imminent for all the Western states. They had either to recognize the suzerainty of Assyria, or to fight for their independence against the powerful Assyrian empire. It goes without saying that each state by itself could not have undertaken the struggle with such a formidable enemy. Thus it is natural that they should have allied themselves to avert the common danger. While Israel under the reign of Menahem joined this Western confederacy, Judah did not, and not without reason, as we shall presently see. The power of Assyria was well known to the Western nations. Its decline was due to indolent rulers who were peacefully inclined. To defend themselves against Assyria required the straining of all the resources of the Western states, the training of all able-bodied men for military service, the fortification of all their cities, and especially the firm resolve of the allies to fight to the last man for the independence of their countries. A successful defense demanded in each state the united efforts of the whole population. But this could not be expected of a state where discord prevailed. Yet discord

was bound to be a normal condition in a state based upon the system of inequality, where the government was in the hands of the higher classes, while the people at large were without rights and at the mercy of the nobility. A state that could not fulfill all these expectations would have been, as an ally, a liability rather than an asset.

While we have not exact information about the political and social conditions of other Syrian states that formed a confederacy against Assyria, we know those of Judah. The upper classes were debauched, corrupt, oppressors of the poorer classes, and people of that type are indifferent to everything but their own pleasures. It never entered their mind to spend all their resources for the defense of their country. They could not have offered their lives to ward off the danger threatening their country, having become effeminate through leading a life of pleasure. Moreover, they had no chance of having any military experience during the long peaceful years of Uzziah's reign, after the Arameans had been thoroughly defeated and kept quiet. Nor could the common people have been expected to sacrifice their lives for the preservation of their country's independence, since it was practically the property of their oppressors. Furthermore, it was dangerous for the nobility to give the common people military training, as it would have given them an excellent opportunity to overthrow their oppressors. Therefore it is natural that Judah should not have joined the allies against Assyria, as it could not have placed an efficient army at their disposal. Nor were its governing classes willing to incur heavy expenses in contributing to the support of the alliance.

The fact that this alliance was ineffective and fell to pieces as soon as the Assyrian army marched into the West may safely be attributed to the social and political systems of the allied states which were on the whole similar to those of Judah. The Northern Kingdom of Israel was the first

of the allies to submit to Tiglathpileser IV and to recognize his suzerainty, as soon as he had entered into its territory or its neighborhood. The social conditions of this state were of course the same as those of Judah, as we know from Amos and Hosea. Its inability to resist the Assyrian power ought to have been a foregone conclusion. It is no surprise that the Israelitish state so easily submitted to Assyria and broke up thereby the Western confederacy, and we need not seek any other explanation for this surrender which is regarded as an act of treachery. On the contrary, it seems strange and almost inconceivable that the leading classes of Israel should not have been aware of the debility of their kingdom that was nigh identical with that of Judah and should not have preferred to remain neutral, as did Judah. However, the policy of joining the allies may not have been approved by the leading classes of Israel at all. This may have been the autocratic decision of the cruel king Menahem. From the biblical records we may gather that Menahem was by no means willingly recognized as king of Israel, after having overthrown the regicide Shallum, by a large number of the people of Israel, and could keep himself on the throne only by force, as it is narrated: "Then Menahem smote Tiphseh, and all that were therein, and the borders thereof, from Tirzah; because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it; and all the women therein that were with child he ripped up" (II Kings 15.16). The geographical position of Tirzah is unknown. But since it was the capital of Jeroboam I and of his successors, until it was superseded by Samaria, it must have been situated somewhat in the territory of Ephraim. But Tiphseh was the Northern limit of Solomon's dominions west of the Euphrates (I Kings 5.4). Scholars who do not consider that there was such a rebellion against Menahem, comprising almost the whole of Israel, contend that Tiphseh mentioned here was the name of a locality near Tirzah, and is not identical

with that on the Euphrates. But it must have been a city of importance, strongly fortified, if the biblical author referred to it, and not an obscure locality, and this would be the case, if it was identical with the latter, which even in later times, under the name of Thapsacus, was a center of commerce.

It would thus seem that the largest part of Israel refused to recognize the accession of Menahem as king. It would show that the murder of Zechariah, the last king of the Jehu-dynasty, by Shallum was not due exclusively to the ambition of this individual who aspired to the throne, but was the outcome of a wide-spread dissatisfaction among the people who approved of his act and readily acknowledged his rule. This we may gather also from the biblical statement: "And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and smote him *before the people*, and slew him, and reigned in his stead" (II Kings 15.10). It is quite likely that Menahem held himself on the throne with the help of Aramean mercenaries, and the leading classes not being of a warlike disposition were powerless to overthrow him. Now in the biblical record quoted above a singular act of cruelty is ascribed to Menahem, that he ripped up all pregnant women. But it is almost unbelievable that the Israelites should have been so cruel to their own people. It is nowhere found that Israel had ever treated in such a cruel way their foreign enemies. But such a cruelty is ascribed by the Second Book of Kings (8.12) to Hazael, king of the Arameans. It tells that the prophet Elisha wept as he announced to Hazael his succession as king of Damascus, and, on being asked by the latter the reason for his weeping, replied: "Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel; their strongholds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash in pieces their little ones, and rip up their women with child." Amos ascribed this cruelty to the Ammonites as having done so to Gilead (1.13).

This they did in the wars of Hazael against Israel, as his allies and at his command. These wars were restricted to the East-Jordan territories, as it is stated: "In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short; and Hazael smote them in all the borders of Israel: from the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the valley of Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan" (II Kings 10.32-33). Thus it is natural that the Ammonites who always claimed these territories as their own (Judges 11.13) should have taken part in these wars of Hazael, and willingly committed that cruelty toward the Israelites. They actually achieved their aspirations to these territories after the deportation of the East-Jordan tribes by Tiglathpileser IV. This we know from Jeremiah's denunciation of the Ammonites, in asking: "Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why then did Malcam take possession of Gad, and his people dwell in the cities thereof?" (49.1). The prophet Hosea predicted such a cruel punishment for Samaria: "They shall fall by the sword, their little ones shall be dashed in pieces and their women with child shall be ripped up" (14.1). Who knows whether Menahem did not treat the wives of his opponents in Samaria as he did in Tiphseh, and Hosea actually referred to the cruelty of this king? Therefore it is quite likely that this deed was committed by Menahem's Aramean mercenaries who were used to warfare of this kind.

Not being able to rely upon the loyalty of his own people, Menahem joined the allies, and by their help he expected to maintain his rule over Israel. For this tyrant the independence of his country was of secondary consideration. His only thought was the preservation of his throne, even as vassal of any power that would assist him to achieve this aim. Therefore, as soon as Tiglathpileser entered his land, he immediately was ready to submit to him on any condition. This is clear from the biblical records which

state: "There came against the land Pul the king of Assyria; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, *that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand*. And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria" (II Kings 15.19-20). From this narration we may gather that on the arrival of the Assyrian king, the leading classes, who were opposed to Menahem, received him with open arms, and implored him to save them from their tyrannous king. But Menahem declared himself ready to pay any amount, if the Assyrian king would confirm the kingdom in his hand. The Assyrian kings were not only great conquerors but also statesmen of unusual ability. It was a stroke of great diplomacy to accede to the demands of Menahem and to maintain him on the throne, as it would keep the state in a condition of fermentation and discord, and thus the Assyrian king could trust that it would no longer be troublesome to Assyria. The political maxim: *Divide et Impera* was already used by the Assyrians, as by other nations in antiquity.

Menahem's defection in submitting to Assyria was the signal for all other members of the confederacy to follow his example and to do the same. They deserted the confederacy and saved themselves by paying heavy tributes to the Assyrian conqueror and parted with their independence. However, we may rest assured that these former allies bitterly detested Menahem for his conduct which they branded as treachery. But we have seen that he had to choose between two evils, either to desert the allies or to lose his throne and probably also his life. And he chose the lesser evil, for: "all that a man hath will he give for his life." But the allies looked upon it from their own point of view. He was not forced to join their confederacy, and if he had remained neutral, they would have had a chance to fight against Assyria. However, they were powerless to

avenge themselves on Menahem for his treacherous conduct, since he was under the protection of the Assyrian suzerain. The same reason prevented the leading classes of Israel from conspiring against him, since Assyria would have used such a conspiracy as pretext for annexing their land and making it an Assyrian province. But Menahem seems to have died shortly after these events, and was succeeded by his son Pekahiah. The biblical records assigned to him a reign of two years (II Kings 15.23). This may be correct according to the reckoning of biblical chronology. The Rabbis state that if a king died in the last month of the year, the first month of the next year is reckoned as the second year of his reign. This may be true also of the reign of Pekahiah, in assigning to him a reign of two years by the biblical historian, and it is very likely that he reigned only a few months. If so, the death of Menahem occurred only a few months before that of his son, about 737, seeing that in the year 736 we already find Pekah the son of Remaliah on the throne. Now biblical chronology assigned to Menahem a reign of ten years (II Kings 15.17). But this date is very questionable, as it is scarcely conceivable that on the arrival of Tiglathpileser in the West, after the fall of Arpad in the year 739, Menahem should have been on the throne for a period of seven years. The very words "*to confirm the kingdom in his hand,*" indicate that he had ascended the throne quite recently and was not yet firmly established as king of Israel. If this happened only recently, Jeroboam II must have died about 740, and Menahem became king seven months later. Thus Menahem reigned only about four years (740-737).

Now the leading classes of Israel could do nothing against Menahem, the protégé of the Assyrian suzerain. But his son Pekahiah had not yet been recognized by the latter, and before he had a chance to send an embassy to Assyria requesting his recognition, they conspired against him and he was murdered by Pekah the son of Remaliah who suc-

ceeded him. Yet it was not likely that his murderers would escape with impunity. Now it seems that after the passing of the Jehu-dynasty, there was a feud between the two Joseph-Tribes Ephraim and Manasseh, and each of these tribes aspired to the throne of Israel. With regard to the Jehu-dynasty there is a rabbinical tradition that it belonged to the tribe of Manasseh. Yet it is questionable whether this is a real tradition and not based upon the fact that Jehu was anointed by the prophet as king of Israel at Ramoth-Gilead (II Kings 9.3). But this does not prove that Jehu was a Gileadite. He was in that region merely temporarily as commander of the army against the Arameans. Nor is it likely that the Ephraimites who were the leading tribe in Israel from the times of Joshua, and were jealous of their position to the extent of going to war against the Manassites in the days of Gideon and Jephthah (Judges 8.1-3; 12.1-7), because members of this tribe dared to assume a leading part in Israel, should have freely recognized Jehu as their king, if he had not been an Ephraimite. But it had been conjectured that Shallum, the murderer and successor of Zechariah, belonged to the tribe of Manasseh and he was called "son of Jabesh," because he was a native of Jabesh-Gilead. It has been further suggested that Menahem was named "son of Gadi," because he was a member of the tribe of Gad, and thus he was likewise a Gileadite. Considering that the East-Jordan territory had been for centuries the bone of contention between the Israelites, Arameans, Moabites, and Ammonites, and thus was a "debatable land," and open to attacks from all sides, its inhabitants were bound to become warlike. Otherwise they could not have survived under such conditions. On this point they were different from the leading classes in the West-Jordan territory, who had become effeminate. Therefore it is natural that the kings of Israel should have chosen them as bodyguards and entrusted them with the commands of their armies. They actually played the part

of the "pretorians" in Israel. Shallum was evidently the commander of the bodyguards, while Menahem was the commander-in-chief of the army. It is evident that the former was of a better type, and the people were willing to acknowledge him as king, as we said, but refused to submit to the latter.

However, not only Shallum and Menahem were Gileadites. The same must be true also of Pekah who murdered Pekahiah and succeeded him, seeing that he slew Pekahiah with the assistance of fifty men of the Gileadites (II Kings 15.25). Bearing in mind that the term Gilead often includes the whole region East of the Jordan (Deut. 34.1; Joshua 22.9; Judges 20.1; II Sam. 2.9), and on the other hand, Gilead is presented as the grandson of Joseph (Num. 26.29; Joshua 17.1), all three kings must have claimed the throne of Israel as members of the tribe of Manasseh, descended from the elder son of Joseph "the prince among his brethren" (Gen. 49.26). If so, it would not be farfetched to see in Pekah's successor, Hosea, an Ephraimite again. The conspiracy against Pekah would be quite natural. Tiglathpileser had carried off the Gileadites into captivity. Thus they had no longer any voice in national affairs, and it would have been anomalous that a member of a non-existing tribe should continue to reign over Israel. It was to the feud between the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim that Isaiah referred: "They eat every man the flesh of his own arm: Manasseh *eateth* Ephraim; and Ephraim *eateth* Manasseh; and they together *fall* upon Judah" (9.19-20). In this discourse addressed to both Israel and Judah, Isaiah describes the fratricidal conditions in North Israel.

During the reign of Ahab, Ramoth-Gilead was in the hands of the Arameans, and Ahab in his last war in which he lost his life tried to retake it, as he said to his servants: "Know ye that Ramoth-Gilead is ours, and we are still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Aram?" (I

Kings 22.3). Though Ahab had not succeeded in retaking it, this must have been done under the reign of his son Jehoram, as it was there that Jehu was anointed king over Israel, and it is stated that Jehoram had been guarding Ramoth-Gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Aram (II Kings 9.1-4, 14). But under the reigns of Jehu and Jehoahaz it was again in possession of the Arameans (ibid. 10.33). However, it came back to Israel under the reigns of Joash and Jeroboam II (ibid. 13.25; 14.25). These changes in the fortunes of Ramoth-Gilead which must have involved the whole East-Jordan region do not seem to have been disastrous to the Gileadites. Most of them seem to have lived on friendly terms with the Arameans. Otherwise they could not have survived under Aramean rule. The Arameans neither expelled them from this territory nor exterminated them, with the exception of those who resisted them. If Menahem was a Gileadite he may have been inclined in a friendly way toward the Arameans. We have therefore assumed that a large part of his army may have consisted of Aramean mercenaries. The same may hold true of the Gileadite Pekah. Immediately on his accession he concluded an alliance with Rezin king of the Arameans. The incentive for forming this alliance, instead of recognizing the suzerainty of Tiglathpileser, may have been the fear that Assyria might use the murder of the son of Menahem as a pretext for attacking the state of Israel and reducing it to an Assyrian province. It is also possible that Pekah was willing to submit to Assyria, and Tiglathpileser refused to accept his submission and condemned him to death for the murder of Pekahiah.

Pekah and Rezin intended to revive the former confederacy against Assyria. But it seems that almost all of the former allies remained indifferent to such a proposal. Experience had taught them the futility of such an enterprise. However, they succeeded in gaining two allies who

had not been members of the former confederacy and thus did not have the benefit of past experiences. These were the Philistines and the Edomites. However, the refusal of the other Western states to join this alliance did not seem to Damascus and Israel of great importance, if they could draw Judah into it. They saw in Judah a land of great resources and of very important strategical position, and believed that the united efforts of the three countries Aram, Israel, and Judah would make them invincible, and they could repulse successfully the attacks of the Assyrians. But Judah as formerly would not and could not join this alliance. The governing classes of Judah knew its weak points. The allies would of course insist that Judah should share the burdens of the war in accordance with their resources, placing at their disposal a well equipped and trained army. But the effeminate nobles of Judah could not and would not expose their precious lives for the independence of their country. Nor did they dare to train and arm the hardy lower classes for such a purpose. They feared lest the well-armed proletariates would turn their arms against their own native oppressors before trying to repulse the foreign invaders. What could Judah answer the allies on being urged to join them? The governing classes could not proclaim openly their weakness. They knew that their participation in the alliance would not strengthen the power of the allies who for themselves were too weak to wage a war with Assyria. Their defeat was a foregone conclusion, and being an ally, Judah would be inevitably lost, even if the Judeans should not personally oppose the Assyrians. There was only one way out of this dilemma: To abolish the system of inequality, to restore to the people at large their political rights and the estates of which they had been deprived, and to re-establish the Judean state upon the principles of Israel's religion, equality and justice. In brief, to comply with the prophetic postulates. In a state where equality and justice prevailed, the com-

mon people, if properly trained, would give up the last ounce of their blood for the defense of the independence of their country. But reason is powerless against men who are deaf and blind and devoid of understanding.

Now we have observed that the social conditions of Israel must have been somewhat similar to those of Judah. The former was also based on the principle of inequality, and there also oppression of the poor and injustice prevailed, as we know from the prophetic denunciations of Amos and Hosea. Nevertheless the kings of Israel were able to raise armies and to conduct wars. If the nobility of Israel was not so far debauched as to lose their warlike qualities, and were willing to fight wars of defense or aggression, should not the same hold true of the nobility of Judah? We have further pointed out that all other states of antiquity, except those of a primitive character, were likewise established on the same principle of inequality, and this system did not deprive the leading classes of their warlike disposition. Should we not expect the same of Judah? However, we must bear in mind that in countries where there are changes of dynasties, due to factions and civil wars, the position of the nobility is never secure and permanent. There are vicissitudes of ups and downs in their fortunes. Every change of the dynasty creates a new nobility out of the warriors who effected this change, and they may often belong to the lower classes which were formerly oppressed. This new nobility is of course endowed with the estates of the opponents of the new dynasty. This newly created nobility consist of valiant men of a hardy disposition, used to a frugal life, who are ready to lay down their lives for the new dynasty which raised them to honors and riches. It stands to reason that their descendants, raised in affluence and luxury, leading an easy life, and indulging in pleasures, are bound to become effeminate. However, it takes a few generations to effect such a change. Now changes of dynasties were the rule among all nations

of antiquity. We may take it as a truism that only those among the people would look for such changes and would try to effect them who have everything to gain if successful, and nothing to lose in the case of failure. Wealthy classes, as a rule, would be loyal supporters of the reigning dynast and oppose all changes. Thus it is natural that the main supporters of the new dynasty should consist of the poorer classes. If victorious, they would become the pillars of the state, and supersede the old nobility loyal to the preceding dynasty.

Even in Egypt where in an early period dynasties endured for centuries, and the nobility lost in the course of time their warlike nature, the founders of new dynasties could as a rule enter upon careers of conquest, with the support of newly created nobilities at their disposal who were ready to shed their blood for the ambitions of their kings by whom they were raised to the position of wealth and dignities. It was somewhat different in Assyria which rested on a military system. The prerequisites demanded of an Assyrian king were warlike ability and military skill, and he could not endure if he did not possess these qualifications. Assyrian kings were frequently murdered, if they showed themselves indolent in leading their armies on a career of conquests or were unsuccessful in their campaigns. It stands to reason that the same qualities were demanded of the Assyrian nobility, and those who did not possess them may have lost their positions and their estates, if not their lives as well. On this point the Assyrians were "the Spartans" of the Orient. The gradual decay of Assyria under the reign of Ashurbanipal may have been chiefly due to the loss of these qualities by the nobility.

Change of dynasties was the normal condition in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. The first dynasty of Jeroboam lasted about 24 years (I Kings 14.20; 15.25); that of Baasha 26 (*ibid.* 15.33; 16.8); that of Omri 48 (*ibid.* 16.23, 29; 22.52; II Kings 3.1); and that of Jehu 101 (II

Kings 10.36; 13.1, 10; 14.23). The latter dynasty actually ended with the death of Jeroboam II, as his successor Zechariah reigned only six months, and he was murdered by Shallum who after a reign of one month was slain by Menahem. We have seen that Menahem reigned only about four years and that his son Pekahiah probably reigned only a few months. Pekah the successor of Pekahiah could have reigned only from 736 to 732. He was murdered and succeeded by Hosea, the last king of Israel, whose reign lasted 9 years and ended with the fall of Samaria. We must also refer to the period of six years when Israel was practically divided into two kingdoms, as it is stated: "Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri. But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath; so Tibni died, and Omri reigned" (I Kings 16.21-22).

It goes without saying that each founder of a dynasty raised his supporters to high positions as rewards for their endeavors in his behalf and to insure their loyalty, as the fall of the dynasty would involve the downfall of those who contributed to its establishment. Baasha could not have destroyed the whole house of Jeroboam without exterminating at the same time his loyal adherents. The estates of these men went of course into the possession of Baasha's favorites who had been his faithful followers and had assisted him to establish himself on the throne. Many of them were probably men who formerly were of no importance, as only people of that type would put their lives and those of their families in jeopardy on a chance of being able to overthrow an established dynasty. The regicide Zimri who exterminated the house of Baasha (I Kings 16.12) had scarcely a chance of rewarding his followers, as he reigned only seven days. And we may well imagine their awful fate when Omri was elected king. Though

this king may have been a faithful adherent of Baasha and would not have deprived his courtiers and officials of their estates and positions, yet they were at his disposal to bestow on his own adherents, as Zimri actually had destroyed all the friends and adherents of Baasha (*ibid.* 16.11). But Omri, as we have seen, was recognized only by a part of Israel; the other part followed his rival Tibni who was able to maintain himself for the space of six years. It is very probable that a good many of Tibni's partisans lost their estates and positions after Tibni's death, when Omri was generally recognized. They were of course bestowed by Omri on his own supporters of whom not a few may have been of humble origin. The fact that Omri is the only king of Israel whose father's name is unknown may indicate that he was also of obscure origin.

With regard to Jehu's treatment of the adherents and officials of the Omri-dynasty, this king having been the most zealous worshipper of Jahveh, it is natural that he should have exterminated the leading classes of Israel which were Baal-worshippers: "So Jehu smote all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his familiar friends, and his priests, until there was left him none remaining" (*II Kings* 10.11). With his accession rose a new nobility, and we may be assured that most of them belonged to the people at large, who formerly played no part in the affairs of the state, as they belonged to the faithful worshippers of Jahveh, though worshipping Him in presentations. It is not likely that such a nobility should have been oppressors of the poor. Their gradual corruption may be ascribed to the long duration of the Jehu-dynasty, about 101 years. In the days of Amos and Hosea (760-735), the descendants of this nobility had already acquired all the defects and vices of men who live a life of leisure and possess the means for indulging in all pleasures. Their manner of life is described by Amos: "They lie upon beds of ivory, and

stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; who thrum on the psaltery, who devise for themselves instruments of music, like David; who drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments; but they are not grieved for the hurt of Joseph" (6.4-6). The prophet indicates in the concluding passage of this description, that these nobles were indifferent to the fate of their people, and cared only for their own pleasures.

From the prophet's description of the economic conditions of Israel during this period we know that there was a famine throughout the country due to years of drought, followed by a plague of locusts and pestilence (4.6-10). But the wealthy classes closed their eyes to all these miseries, indulging in luxuries at the expense of their tenants who perished from want of the necessities of life. Amos in his denunciation of the debauchery of the nobles did not address himself exclusively to those of the Northern kingdom, but included also those of Judah, exclaiming: "Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion, and unto them that are secure in the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the first of the nations, to whom the house of Israel come!" (6.1). It was fortunate for Israel that during that period they had no need to defend themselves against foreign aggression. Assyria, as we have seen, was at that time in a state of decadence, and did not make any attempt to invade the West, and the Arameans had not yet recovered from their former defeats under Jehoash and Jeroboam II and kept quiet. The nobles prided themselves upon their former memorable victories over the Arameans and boasted of being able to repulse any foreign invader of their country. But the prophet answered them: "Ye that rejoice *in the victory* of Lo-dabar, that say: 'Have we not taken Karnaim by our own strength?' For, behold, I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel, saith the Lord, the God of hosts; and they shall afflict you from the entrance of

Hamath unto the brook of the Arabah" (6.13-14). The prophet referred of course to Assyria. If Israel had been threatened at that time by a foreign power, the wealthy classes would not have been able to offer resistance successfully, as they had become degenerate and were no longer warlike. The common people would have been indifferent to the fate of their country.

There is good reason for the assumption that during that period the nobility of Israel was even more depraved than that of Judah. If Amos had seen in Judah the same corruption and immorality among the leading classes, he would not have gone to Israel, but would have devoted his prophetic activity to improve conditions among his own people in Judah. He evidently believed that Israel was more in need of his prophetic ministry than his own country. From Hosea's utterances we may also gather that Judah, though far gone in corruption during his activity, more than formerly in the days of Amos, was not so bad as Israel, and was not altogether hopeless. In one passage he appeals to Judah to take warning and abstain from Israel's transgressions, saying: "Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah become guilty" (4.15), that is to say, if Israel is determined to continue in its apostasy, Judah ought to refuse to participate in its corrupt practices. Now the originality of this passage has been questioned by modern critics, in pointing out that judging from the denunciations of Isaiah and Micah, there was little difference between the conditions in these two kingdoms. This objection to the genuine character of the passage is utterly wrong. While with regard to injustice and oppression of the poor Judah was scarcely better than Israel, Hosea deals here with religious prostitution as practiced in the sanctuaries of Israel (4.13-14). But neither Isaiah nor Micah accused Judah of these practices. Nor did they charge Judah with Baalim-worship. They naturally condemned such a Jahveh-worship, which disregarded

the moral requirements of justice and righteousness, but they could not accuse Judah of having turned away from Jahveh and worshipped other gods. Thus Judah was actually faithful toward Jahveh, and Hosea could rightly say: "Ephraim compasseth Me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit; and Judah is yet wayward towards God, and towards the Holy One who is faithful" (12.1).

Now many of the leading classes must have lost their positions and their wealth with the downfall of the Jehu-dynasty. We have already referred to Menahem who cruelly treated all those that refused to submit to him as king of Israel. It stands to reason that he should have demanded this recognition from the leading classes and not from the common people who were without political rights. On the contrary, the common people ought to have welcomed a king who was not on good terms with the nobility. We may credit them with good sense that this they actually did, willingly enrolling themselves in the ranks of his supporters, as from such a ruler they could expect justice against their oppressors. If the nobility looked askance at the king, he would not be prejudiced in their favor. Thus it is natural that the positions and estates of his opponents should have been bestowed by Menahem upon those who assisted him in his aim, of whom a large number probably belonged to the lower classes. We must also keep in mind that a king who creates a new nobility would prefer to elevate men of obscure origin, who would look up to him with reverence and gratitude, rather than the families of the old nobility who would look down upon him as an upstart and despise him in their heart. He was no doubt hated and detested by the former ruling classes, as seen from the fact that he gave Tiglath-pileser a thousand talents to confirm the kingdom in his hand. We have already pointed out that Shallum, who murdered Zechariah, seems to have been a favorite with *the people*, which means the ruling classes, and they could

not have favored his murderer, Menahem. It is not without significance that it is stated: "And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth" (II Kings 15.20). This does not mean that they were the only owners of landed property. The number of those who possessed real estate may have been much larger. If so, Menahem was actually a protector of the poor people, as he did not force them to part with the few fields and vineyards they possessed to pay this tribute.

The nobility created by Menahem were neither oppressors nor had they a chance to become effeminate and lose their warlike qualities during his short reign. Thus Menahem, though cruel to his opponents, was a protector of the common people, and they willingly supported him. But his kingdom was a house divided against itself, and he could not offer resistance to Tiglathpileser as a member of the Western confederacy, as has already been pointed out. If he had done so, he would have made an end of his country, which would have shared the fate of Arpad and Unki, becoming an Assyrian province. He would not have become faithless to the allies, if there had been a chance to avoid it. No king parts willingly with his independence, and Menahem was no exception. The allies may not have known the internal conditions of his country and looked upon him as a traitor to the cause of the West. Now we have seen that Pekah had murdered Pekahiah with the help of fifty Gileadites. It may be taken as a foregone conclusion that Pekah's main supporters were the East-Jordan tribes. With the downfall of the Jehu-dynasty they had become for the first time under the monarchy the leading tribes in Israel. We have pointed out that the preservation of their warlike qualities was due to the fact that they hardly ever lived on good terms with the Moabites, Ammonites, and other half-nomadic tribes, and that their region was for more than a century the battle-ground of the Israelitish and Aramean armies. Thus in the Gileadites

Pekah possessed a ready army at his disposal. But his condition would have been rather precarious, if his only reliance had been upon the Eastern tribes. We may readily assume that he murdered Menahem's successor with the connivance of the former nobility, who could not but detest Menahem, and he was willingly recognized by them. Seeing, however, that he must have deprived Menahem's followers of their positions, he could not have been in favor with the common people. But he could easily dispense with their friendship and their loyalty, since he had on his side the Gileadites, who were willing to fight for a king who was a member of their own people, and the nobility. However, after Tiglathpileser had carried off the Gileadites into captivity, Pekah lost his main support, and was promptly murdered by Hosea, who succeeded him.

Thus in the Northern kingdom the nobility was not of a stable and permanent character, but was changeable, and this change went hand in hand with the change of the dynasty. It was more in the nature of an office than of a caste. Noble descent was not a prerequisite for its membership. Men of humble origin frequently attained this position. Therefore notwithstanding the fact that the state of Northern Israel was based on the system of inequality, the common people did not always suffer under the oppressive rule of the nobility. Men rising from the common people, who were used to a frugal life and inured to hardships, did not become overnight, as it were, oppressors of their own class from which they rose to high positions, nor did they lead a life of debauchery to lose thereby their warlike qualities. The same holds true also of the neighboring states of Israel. There also were frequent dynastic changes, and with every change a new nobility came to the fore. Thus the leading classes among them may never have had a chance of losing their warlike qualities, by leading a life of pleasure and luxury, and oppressing the poorer classes from whose ranks they rose to their present posi-

tions. The corruption of the nobility of Israel may be exclusively attributed to the long reign of the Jehu-dynasty which endured for 101 years. It was only toward the end of this period that the nobility had become effeminate and lost its warlike qualities. Its consequences were moral corruption, the prevalence of injustice and all the other vices with which the prophets charged Israel.

It was different in the Southern kingdom. There the nobility had become a caste, owing to the permanency and stable character of the David-dynasty. It goes without saying that the descendants of the followers of David constituted the nobility, and this position went down through the ages by inheritance. Noble birth was a prerequisite for belonging to the noble classes. It was never rejuvenated by the infusion of new blood. It is no wonder that genealogy played such an important part with the returned exiles. The noble families prided themselves upon their ancestry and possessed genealogical documents to prove their descent. They based their authority upon their descent, and looked with contempt upon people of obscure origin. This conceit erected a barrier between the nobility and the people at large. This pride created a gulf between them that could not be bridged over. The nobles could never be degraded from their rank, and the common people could never achieve a leading position. It may not be without significance that it was just during the days of the great prophets Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah, when the corruption of the nobility of both Israel and Judah set in, that the noble families wanted to prove by documentary evidence their right to the high positions they occupied, and for this purpose composed genealogies, as it is stated: "All these were reckoned by genealogies in the days of Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel" (I Chron. 5.17).

King and court constituted a single institution, and just as the crown went down by inheritance, so also the cour-

tiers claimed to hand down their offices to their descendants. The king evidently recognized this claim. So it came about that the government and all the high offices were in the hands of the nobility. The administration of law was also in their hands, and if they happened to be dishonest, they could easily deprive the people of their property, which evidently was not seldom the case, as Micah states: "Her chiefs judge for reward" (3.11). While the priests played the part of lawyers, in explaining the points of the law involved in the case, and advising as to the prosecution or defense of lawsuits, the final judgment rested with the nobles who were not immune to bribery. But the nobles were not the only class that claimed their office by right of inheritance. The Levitical priests did exactly the same. Their claim was of course based on the Mosaic ordinance. Nevertheless in a state where there was a caste with special privileges, similar castes were expected to develop on the same lines, and the people had no objection to their claim. Under other conditions, their claims would have been ignored. Thus the state of Judah, almost like that of Egypt, consisted of four classes: Dynasty, Aristocracy, Priests, and Yeomen. The fourth class were of course the overwhelming majority of the people, engaged in agriculture, cattle-raising, commerce, mechanics. Though all the offices of state were in the hands of the nobility, the common people played a not unimportant part in the affairs of the country. While the nobility were designated *Sārīm* "rulers," the yeomen are referred to as *Am-Haareṣ* "the people of the country," or *Ha-Am* "the people." Each community was evidently under the leadership of "Elders" who were the spokesmen of the people and acted in their behalf. Their importance in the affairs of the state can be seen from the fact that both Josiah and his son Jehoahaz were placed on the throne by "the people of the land" (II Kings 21.24; 23.30).

However, if the people at large had been powerful in the

affairs of the country, there would have been no room for the prevalence of oppression and injustice. It would thus seem that the "Elders" were those among the common people who were wealthy, and by reason of it, they could rule their villages in a high-handed manner, while all the others of agricultural and pastoral occupations were tenants, and had no rights and no voice in the communal affairs. We may suppose that under this feudal system the nobility, who were nominally the warrior class and whose obligation was to render military service for the tenure of its estates, was free from taxation. They were the pillars of the state and responsible for its independence, welfare, and the management of its affairs in war and in peace. The burden of taxation was borne by the common people who either possessed freeholdings, or were tenants, or were engaged in the pursuits of commerce and mechanical trades. The lowest classes, consisting of serfs and slaves, were naturally free from all taxation, as their labors and earnings belonged to their masters and they possessed no property whatever.

There was also a sprinkling of aliens in the land, who, though being without any rights, may have been in a more favorable position than the poor natives, and not without influence. Most of them may have consisted either of mercenaries or foreign priests, men of learning, who acted in the capacity of diviners in various sanctuaries, as we shall further see. It is also very likely that there were not a few Phoenician merchants who had to be treated with all consideration by high and low, as they were of the utmost importance for the commercial intercourse of the Judean state. Nor is it likely that strangers who sought protection as refugees were badly treated, as it was a general conception in antiquity that strangers stand under the special protection of the Godhead, and Judah no doubt held the same belief, even those among the Judeans who disregarded the laws of Israel's religion and did not act in ac-

cordance with the laws of the Book of the Covenant which has a special provision for the protection of strangers: "And a stranger shalt thou not wrong, neither shalt thou oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Ex. 22. 20). This law is repeated there: "And a stranger shalt thou not oppress; for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (ibid. 23.9). Leviticus goes even much further with regard to the treatment of a stranger in commanding to love him as a native: "And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not do him wrong. The stranger that sojourneth with you shall be unto you as the home-born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (19.33-34). Deuteronomy distinctly declares that the Lord loves a stranger: "He doth execute justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him bread and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (10. 18-19). Now while the love of the Lord for Israel is qualified, in making it dependent upon their conduct (Deut. 7.8 ff.), no qualification is expressed with regard to the love of the Lord for the stranger. But does it stand to reason that the Lord should love the stranger, even if he practices all kinds of immorality? Yet neither Leviticus nor Deuteronomy contain any provision for the conduct of the stranger. However, this is a fallacy. No provision of that kind was necessary, seeing that the Noachian laws are obligatory upon all mankind, and they include morality. But the sacrificial ordinances of Numbers (15.22-31) seem to indicate that the stranger is bound to observe all Mosaic laws without exception. If so, would it not be imposing a hardship upon the stranger who seeks a refuge in Israel to require of him the observance of all moral and ritual ordinances of the Mosaic religion? The Rabbis seem to have felt this difficulty, and therefore contend that these ordinances exclusively refer to idolatry, and its pro-

hibition is indeed one of the Noachian laws. This is correct from an archaeological point of view, as the stranger can no longer worship his ancestral god when he leaves his own country, and cannot but accept the god of the land where he sojourns. Therefore in the land of Israel, the stranger is bound to become a worshipper of the God of Israel.

Now it is especially noteworthy that Deuteronomy, in the ordinances with regard to dispensing of charity, places the stranger before the orphan and widow (14.29; 16.11, 14; 24.20, 21; 26.12, 13). But these were of course postulates, and we may reasonably doubt whether they were ever carried out in fact. However, it is certainly not without reason that the prophets that denounce Israel for the oppression of the orphan and widow nowhere refer to the wronging of the stranger by Israel. Judging from their silence concerning the treatment of strangers, it certainly seems that the leading classes in Israel treated the strangers much better than their own poor brethren and the orphans and widows. This will be readily admitted even from a critical point of view. The modern critics who deny the Mosaic authorship of all these biblical ordinances must naturally believe that they reflect the actual position of the strangers in Israel, both in pre-exilic and post-exilic times. The same would hold true of the curse pronounced upon Israel for their disobedience to the divine commandments: "The stranger that is in the midst of thee shall mount up above thee higher and higher; and thou shalt come down lower and lower. He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him; he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail" (Deut. 28.43-44). Seeing that this part of Deuteronomy is ascribed by the critics to the *Deuteronomists*, they would naturally maintain that we have in this curse a description of the actual conditions of Judah during the period of its corruption, when the aliens there were of paramount influence, though not of numerical

strength. They might say that this passage refers to Phoenician money-lenders who bought up the agricultural produce at their own price, because they had advanced money to the Judean farmers who had to take any price the money-lenders were willing to give. In their own country, they were helpless against the sharp practices of the Phoenician merchants. Phoenicia no doubt protected the interests of its merchants, and Judah did not dare to be on bad terms with its powerful neighbor.

However, if the Judeans had actually suffered from the overbearing conduct of the strangers and their oppressive extortions, does it seem likely that the biblical authors would nevertheless have insisted upon loving the strangers and supporting them, notwithstanding their sad experiences of the past? Should it not look more probable that these biblical ordinances concerning the treatment of strangers actually date from a very early period, neither from the days of Josiah nor from the exilic times? As a matter of fact, there is good reason for the assumption that the conduct of the strangers described is an historical fact. The biblical authors would have deleted such a statement, if they had not known the conditions as described actually existed in Judah. It would have been nothing short of slander to accuse strangers of having committed a dishonorable deed of which they had been innocent. The same writers who decreed love for a stranger could not have branded the strangers as oppressors. But if the accusation was an actual fact, they could not have suppressed it. However, notwithstanding the fact that it depicts actual conditions, there is no reason for regarding it, from a critical point of view, as a *vaticinium post eventum*. We can well imagine that strangers who lived in a country whose inhabitants had become effeminate and degenerate should become powerful even to the extent of making themselves masters of the country. This was evidently the case in Egypt when the foreign Hyksos were able to overthrow the

native dynasty and establish an empire of their own, without striking a blow, as Manetho declares. The downfall of the Sumerians and the rise of the Semites in Babylonia was also due to the decay of the former. Therefore there would be nothing strange, if Moses should have threatened Israel, in case of their disobedience, with a somewhat similar fate, that the strangers would become their masters. If at all, we might see in the reference to money-lending an expansion of the original curse that would have been pronounced by Moses. If we omit this reference, the passage would read: "The stranger that is in the midst of thee shall mount up above thee higher and higher; and thou shalt come down lower and lower. He shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail." This would mean actual subjection of Israel to the strangers in their midst. Seeing, however, that Israel did not suffer such a fate, but financially was subject to the foreign money-lenders, this curse was interpreted historically.

Now we have observed that among the foreigners in Judah there were also mercenaries. To be sure, as to their existence in Judah during the two last centuries, there is no absolute evidence from the biblical records. However, the employment of foreign mercenaries in Judah would be quite natural, seeing that the nobility was effeminate and unfit for military service, and it was dangerous to train the common people for such a purpose, as they might have used their military knowledge to overthrow the existing order of the state. The only way out of such a dilemma was to employ foreign mercenaries. The government could safely trust their loyalty, as long as it paid their salaries. They were used chiefly or perhaps exclusively for the protection of the government against the common people and for enforcing its authority. It is likely that beside their military pay in money they were also given on the royal domains houses, fields and vineyards, and there they constituted military colonies, as long as they remained in the

country. Considering that Judah was not a wealthy state, it was not in a position to take into its service a large army of sufficient strength to protect it against foreign aggression. Egypt, one of the wealthiest countries in antiquity, could do so. From the Carian inscriptions found in Egypt we know that Psammetichos had among his mercenaries numerous Carians. This Egyptian king who reigned 664-610 B.C.E. was able to consolidate his power with the help of mercenaries.

Under the reign of Queen Athaliah, we find in Judah a military organization designated *Kari* (II Kings 11.4). This term is no doubt of appellative signification. They were either Carians by birth or were so designated because this organization formerly consisted of Carians. But it may be taken as a foregone conclusion that if Athaliah wanted to establish her reign, she could neither rely upon the loyalty of the native nobility nor upon that of the people at large. For her own protection she could not but use foreign mercenaries. Being a grand-daughter of a Phoenician king and thus closely allied with the Phoenicians, she might have used Phoenician mercenaries for that purpose. However, the very fact that these warriors called *Kari* were willing to side with the Judean conspirators against her rule argues against an assumption that they had been of Phoenician nationality. The overthrow of her reign by Phoenicians would have been on their part an act of treason against their own country. But if they were foreign mercenaries under the name of Carians, the presumption would be in favor of regarding them as Carians by birth. Even if we should not admit the strength of this argument, the fact of being called *Carians* would show that formerly at least natives of Caria must have been employed in Judah as mercenaries. If there was an established military organization of foreign mercenaries under the name of Carians, it would seem unlikely that it should not have been continued under the successors of Athaliah. Jehoash surely

did not dissolve it, as it would have been an act of ingratitude on his part, seeing that he practically owed the throne to this organization. Now we might say that these Carians acted the part of traitors against Athaliah, and one may use traitors but not trust them. But they must have bitterly resented her atrocious act of exterminating the Davidic dynasty, otherwise they would not have assisted in her overthrow. Amaziah and Uzziah, the successors of Jehoash, who conducted campaigns against the Edomites, Philistines, and other neighboring peoples, were in need of all their military resources, and it would be improbable to assume that they dismissed from their service a military organization of foreign mercenaries. On the contrary, they were needed even more than formerly, due to the corruption of the nobility during the long prosperous reign of Uzziah, and the government could no longer rely upon the effeminate leading classes to enforce its authority. Due to the prosperity, Uzziah may have been able to employ a large force of mercenaries. Seeing that the decay of the nobility had become permanent, it is very likely that Uzziah's successors also kept foreign mercenaries in their fold, as they could not dispense with them.

However, though there is no sure evidence from the biblical records to that effect, that foreign mercenaries were in the employ of the Judean government, we know from Sennacherib's inscription that Hezekiah hired Arabian mercenaries, called *Amel-Urbi* "Arabian men," for the defense of Jerusalem, and they were in the city during its siege by the Assyrian king (Sennacherib's Prisma-Inscription Col. III, 31). Hezekiah did not possess the means of hiring a large army of Carians for the defense of his country, and a small band of Carians must have refused to take up an unequal struggle with the Assyrians. If he had a Carian force, we may rest assured that they left him on his revolt against Assyria, as they had no reason to sacrifice their lives for a foreign country in a hopeless cause.

Therefore, Hezekiah was forced to hire mercenaries among the somewhat primitive Arabs who knew little about the Assyrian power, and in their naive conceit believed themselves to be better warriors than the Assyrians and able to defeat them. It is noteworthy that Sennacherib in his inscription cited above referred not only to the Arabs but also to Hezekiah's "pious warriors" (*ṣabe-shu damḳuti*). But who were these *pious warriors*? He surely did not mean the Judeans. He would have called them "foolish, stubborn" or by some other designation. He must have referred to people whose "piety" was beyond question and generally known. Now from Jeremiah (35.1-10) we know that the Rechabites, a sub-division of the Kenites, had come to Jerusalem on the advance of the army of Nebuchadnezzar and out of fear of the army of the Arameans. But of their ancestor Jonadab, who commanded his descendants to drink no wine, to build no houses, to sow no seed, to plant no vineyard, but to dwell in tents, we know that he was not a citizen of Judah, seeing that he was a friend of Jehu who invited him to be present at the extermination of the Baal-worshippers in Israel (II Kings 10.15). If so, his descendants were no Judeans either. Considering that they were nomads, possessing neither houses, nor fields, nor vineyards, what prevented them from retreating to the desert, where they were comparatively safe against any attack from the Chaldean armies? May we not suggest that they were invited by Zedekiah to come to his assistance as foreign mercenaries? Being firm worshippers of Jahveh, it is natural that sympathy with their co-religionists should have been an incentive to accept this invitation. Now the same may have happened in the days of Hezekiah that the Rechabites came to Jerusalem to assist him against the Assyrians. Tribes who lived such an ascetic life as the Rechabites may well have been generally designated "the pious people," and it is to them that Sennacherib may have referred.

With regard to the foreign priests who dwelt in Judah, we have already dwelt on this subject in the beginning of our investigation and shown that the foreign priests designated *Kemārīm* officiated in the places of worship provided for the foreign merchants. We have seen that this designation is generally rendered "idolatrous priests." But what is the etymology of the term *Kōmer*? While this term is found not only in Hebrew but also in Arabic, Syriac and Aramaic, it would seem strange that it should be missing in cuneiform, the language of a country where the priesthood was all-powerful, and possessing an immense variety of priestly terms. Certainly it is found in the Amarna Tablets. But there it is a Canaanism, and is not genuine cuneiform. However, the cuneiform term *Ramku* denotes the priest who pours out the libations, and is derived from the root *ramāku* "to pour out." That this term designates a priest of high rank is evident from the fact that it is equated with *Sangamaḥḥu* "the Great Priest" or "the High Priest," and also with *Ashipu* derived from the root *ashāpu* "to enchant, divine, conjure, prophesy." Cuneiform *Ramku* is as identical with Hebrew *Kōmer* as cuneiform *karābu* with Hebrew *barak* "to bless." Since, however, the root *ramāku* or *kamāru* in the meaning "to pour out" nowhere occurs in Hebrew, we may see in *Kōmer* a loanword from cuneiform. Thus also Hebrew *Kōmer* was the title of a prominent priest who was "diviner, enchanter, conjurer, and prophet."

Now just as in a later period the term *Chaldean* was employed by the classic authors Herodotus, Strabo, Diodorus, and also in the Book of Daniel, as designation of astrologers, and was applied even to those who were not of Chaldean extraction, so also the term *Kōmer* was the designation of those priests who claimed to possess the wisdom and knowledge of the Babylonian priesthood. The people implicitly believed in their divinations, and the reputation of a sanctuary was greatly enhanced by being placed under

the supervision of a priest who possessed the wisdom of the East. The people of course had more confidence in genuine Babylonian diviners, and we may assume that not a few of them came from the Euphrates Valley. But there were also famous temples among the Philistines, as in Ascalon, the center of the fish-goddess Derketo; Gaza, the seat of the god Marna; Ashdod, the seat of Dagon; and Ekron, the seat of Baal-zebub. The oracles of these Philistine temples must have been famous in antiquity. When king Ahaziah fell sick, he sent to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, but Elijah met the messengers and sent them back to the king with the question: "Is it because there is no God in Israel that thou sendest to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron?" (II Kings 1.3, etc.). The Philistines being by origin Aryans, their oracles may have been similar to those of Delphi, Delos, Dodona, and others. Certainly Ahaziah was not the first in Israel to inquire of the oracle of Ekron. We may rest assured that it was customary among the Israelites to seek an oracle at the Philistine shrines, in which they had more confidence than in the oracles of the Israelitish soothsayers. But in the 8th century, under Assyrian influence, many of the Israelitish priests had become adepts in the art of divination. Nevertheless, the Israelites had more confidence in Babylonian or Philistine soothsayers, than in the natives who practiced the same art. It is to this condition that Isaiah refers: "O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord. For *He hath cast off His people, the house of Israel*; for they are full with people from the East, and with soothsayers like the Philistines; yet with children of foreigners they find satisfaction" (2.5-6).

This distrust of the people in their own native diviners was not a religious but an economic problem. A considerable amount of money went year by year out of the country to foreign sanctuaries. They had to pay dearly for a favorable oracle. This was a serious problem for the poor coun-

try of Judah. There was no other way out of this difficulty than to engage foreign priests of high reputation, in whom the people had complete confidence, for each of the Judean sanctuaries. These were the *Kemārīm* who had been appointed by the kings of Judah. They were naturally polytheists. But polytheism is a very tolerant creed. It recognizes the divine character of all the gods worshipped by all nations and races. Thus its believers can freely worship in any sanctuary, and so also in the sanctuaries devoted to the God of Israel. There they divined and prophesied in the name of Jahveh. As to the *Kohanim* in these sanctuaries, they strictly attended to their own functions, consisting of sacrificing, teaching and preaching, and could not be held responsible for the *Kemārīm's* practices. We may perhaps illustrate the positions of the *Kohanim* and *Kemārīm* by the conditions that formerly prevailed and here and there still prevail among the so-called *Ḥasidim*. In almost every large community where *Ḥasidism* flourished in East-Europe, there was a *Rav* who was preacher and teacher, and his knowledge was purely exoteric, and a *Rabbi* who was supposed to be able to perform miracles by reason of his superior esoteric knowledge, possessed only by those initiated into the mysticism of the *Cabbalah*. In the early period of *Ḥasidism*, it very frequently happened that these two kinds of spiritual leaders detested one another. But later it was not an infrequent occurrence that great talmudic scholars attached themselves to the *Ḥasidic Rabbis* and became their successors. In their persons both functions were combined. This was exactly the case of the *Kohanim* and the *Kemārīm*.

CHAPTER VI

The position of the Levitical priesthood—The Levitical towns—The acquisition of property by Levites—The tribal distinction under the monarchy—Priestly descent a curse—The Levites condemned to a life of penury—The curse pronounced against Simeon and Levi—The idea of this curse—The priestly position of the Levites in Egypt—Levi's blessing by Moses—Simeon and Levi individuals—Levi deeply impressed by his father's curse—The story of Micah—Levi's consecration as priest in Jacob's tribal sanctuary—The succession of his children as priests—The fate of Simeon—The conquest of Jerusalem—This city apportioned to the tribe of Simeon—The reconquest of this city by the Jebusites—The high annihilation of the tribe of Simeon—The refuge of the remnants of this tribe among the Judeans—Judah separated from the other tribes by a Canaanitic belt—The emigrations of the Simeonites—The high-priestly office in the temple of Shiloh—The two priestly clans Eleazar and Ithamar—The high priest Eli—The priestly towns of the Aaronides—The high priest Abiathar—The priestly town Anathoth in Benjamin—The seat of the chief sanctuary—The home of the high priests Eleazar and Phinehas—Gibeath-Phinehas—The separation of Judah from the other tribes—The reversion of the high-priestly office to the younger line—The genealogy of the high priests—The Judean chief sanctuary Hebron—The high priest Zadok—The chief sanctuary of Gibeon—The poverty of the Levites—The wealth of the priesthoods in all other countries—The acquisition of landed property by the sanctuary—The treasures of the temple of Jerusalem as national property—The income of the priests—The rise and fall of their fortunes—Their pride on their priestly rank and descent—Their material condition during a period of apostasy—Israel under the influence of the Canaanitic civilization—The Lawgiver's provision for such an emergency—His experiences in the wilderness—The survival of Israel's religion in Canaan—The priestly struggle for existence—The spiritual superiority no cause for envy—The reconfirmation of the ancient position of the Levites—Israel a "kingdom of priests"—The priestly rank of the first-born—The Levites responding to the call of Moses—The chronological order of the priestly ordinances—The priestly rank cause of envy—Korah's revolt—The chiefs of the clans claiming the priestly prerogative—The priestly ordinances prevention of envy—The immigration of the Levites into Judah—Levi's blessing by Moses—Its reference to their substance and warlike qualities—Judah's blessing by Moses—The sympathy of the Levites with the poorer classes—The governing classes of Judah.

THE subject with which the last chapter was concluded leads directly to an investigation of the Levitical priesthood in Israel. We have seen that the burden of taxation fell exclusively upon the common people who had no voice at all in the affairs of the state of Judah. With regard to the priests, it goes without saying that they were free from all taxes, seeing that on the whole they did not possess any landed property, except in the Levitical towns. While these towns were given to the Levites as dwelling-places, and they had no part in the outlying territory, they possessed fields within the open land belonging to each town that was chiefly used for pasturage (Num. 35.2-5). It is quite possible that, in the course of time, this open land was used also for cultivation. From Jeremiah (32.6-44) we know that Hanamel, Jeremiah's cousin, possessed a field in the Levitical town of Anathoth, and Jeremiah, as his next-of-kin, bought it from him on divine command. Thus notwithstanding the biblical ordinance that the Levites and the priests shall have no share and no inheritance in the land of Israel (Num. 18.20, 23, 24, 26; 26.62; Deut. 10.9; 14.27; 18.1-2), they were not without property altogether, in the Levitical towns at least. In accordance with the biblical ordinance that "no inheritance shall be removed from one tribe to another tribe; for the tribes of the children of Israel shall cleave each one to its own inheritance" (Num. 36.9), no Levite could ever acquire landed property outside of the Levitical towns, as it would be a transfer of property from one tribe to another. However, this is somewhat questionable. It may be that a Levite of a Levitical town of Judah was in every respect regarded as an adopted member of this tribe, and the same holds true of Levites dwelling in the Levitical towns of other tribes. But it may also be that the Levites could freely move from one Levitical town to another, though situated among different tribes, as long as these towns belonged to their own priestly clans, either Kohath, Gershon, or Merari. If so, the Levites had no con-

nection with the tribes among whom they dwelt, and could not acquire from them any property. In the same way, no Israelite could purchase the fields of the open land of their cities: "for that is their perpetual possession." Different is the status of houses in the Levitical cities purchased by Israelites. In such cases, the Levitical owners have the perpetual right of redemption, and if unable to do it, the property is returned to them in the year of jubilee (Lev. 25.32-34).

However, under the monarchy the tribal distinction was gradually wiped out. We have seen that according to the constitution of a monarchy, as expounded by Samuel, the king had the prerogative of taking away from his subjects their fields, vineyards, oliveyards, even the best of them, and bestowing them upon his servants (I Sam. 8.14). In giving estates to his officials it is not likely that the king was careful that these estates should be situated within the territory of their own tribes. If the king disregarded the tribal distinction, other Israelites did the same in acquiring property outside of their own tribes. It goes without saying that the king himself possessed royal domains among the various tribes. Moreover, the Mosaic laws were, for the most, mere postulates, which in practice were never fully carried out. We have already pointed out that the laws of slavery, to free the slaves in the seventh year of their servitude, had never been observed, as Jeremiah testified (34.14). For the non-observance of the sabbatical year and all the ordinances connected with it in pre-exilic times we have the testimony of Leviticus (26.34-35, 43) and of Chronicles (II, 36.21). Under such conditions we might well imagine that the Levites were able to acquire landed property, even outside of their own Levitical towns. Nevertheless, we may readily believe that the Levites never made any attempt at doing it. Such an acquisition being theoretically illegal was precarious, since the original owners or their descendants could deprive them of it, in accord-

ance with the Mosaic ordinances, that Levites should not possess property outside of their own Levitical towns. It stands to reason that any Israelite would insist upon their observance, if it were to his advantage to get back his property.

Thus the priests on the whole had the status of strangers, if not beneath them materially. If strangers could buy Israelitish slaves (Lev. 25.47-53), they could also acquire by purchase Israelitish property, which they had to return to its owners in the year of jubilee, if it was not redeemed before (ibid. 25.28). From such a point of view, priestly descent, entailing poverty as a heritage, was a real curse rather than a privilege. The Levitical tribe was actually condemned to a life of penury during its whole existence, from which Levites could not escape, so long as they remained among their own people. If the aim of man is the acquisition of prosperity and independence, their fate must be regarded as the curse of leading a life of dependence upon the charity and generosity of their Israelitish brethren. It is noteworthy that Levites were not willing to accompany Ezra on his return from the captivity, as Ezra stated: "And I viewed the people and the priests, and found there none of the sons of Levi" (8.15). It was only by the influence of prominent men, who may have made them all kinds of promises, that two families, consisting of forty men, were persuaded to leave Babylonia and return to the land of their ancestors (ibid. 8.16-19). One cannot blame them for their reluctance to accept the unenviable fate of leading a life of dependence. In the captivity they had just as much chance as the other Judeans to acquire property and wealth, or at least to gain their livelihood from the labor of their hands in cultivating the soil. The Levitical priests had at least a compensation for the loss of their independence in their superior position of spiritual leaders. But the Levites who occupied a secondary rank in the Temple had no incentive for returning to the land

of Israel but religious devotion, sacrificing all their worldly inclinations and desires for the spiritual welfare of their people.

This is indeed the biblical conception that the fate of the Levites was the consequence of a curse of their tribal ancestor Levi by his father Jacob. This curse pronounced against him and his brother Simeon reads as follows: "Simeon and Levi are brethren; weapons of violence their kinship. Let my soul not come into their council; unto their assembly let my glory not be united; for in their anger they slew men, and in their self-will they disabled oxen. Accursed be their wrath, for it is fierce, and their rage, for it is cruel; I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel" (Gen. 49.5-7). In this oracle we have the idea expressed that immature men who act in accordance with their passions, and do not take into account the common weal, their councils and assemblies are silly and dangerous affairs, which do not redound to the glory and welfare of the race. People of this type should not be given independence and a territory of their own. They must be placed under the guardianship of their relatives who are men of discretion and maturity. Therefore Simeon and Levi should be divided in Jacob and scattered in Israel. Now we have pointed out that there is biblical evidence for the fact that the priestly character of the tribe of Levi does not date from the time of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness, after the Sinaitic legislation, but is much older, and dates perhaps from a period long before the advent of Moses (I Sam. 2.27-30). But Jacob's oracle does not contain the least allusion to the priestly position of the Levites. This silence may safely be taken as a strong argument for its pre-Mosaic origin, that it was almost contemporary with the event. Moreover, considering that the Levites were the spiritual councillors and advisers of Israel, as seen from the Blessing of Moses (Deut. 33.8-11), is it conceivable that a tradition should have arisen to the effect that the

Patriarch Jacob condemned their councils and assemblies? Thus it is impossible that a biblical tradition dating from a post-Mosaic period should have put in the mouth of Israel's ancestor a curse against the sacerdotal tribe of Israel, and it must have originated before the Levites had become the spiritual leaders of their people.

If so, how can we explain that a tribe cursed by the ancestor of Israel should have come into the possession of the priestly office? Furthermore, if the tribes of Simeon and Levi shared this curse in common, how did it happen that Simeon's tribe did not develop into a priestly caste? An explanation of this strange phenomenon that a tribe is cursed and by reason of this curse becomes the priestly guide of its people is possible only if we see, in accordance with the biblical tradition, in Simeon and Levi individuals, chiefs of clans, who committed deeds of violence of a fierce character. On account of it, their father Jacob pronounced a curse upon them on his deathbed. Simeon remained unaffected by this curse, while it made a lasting impression upon Levi and he deeply repented and sought to atone for his crime. He could only do so by prayers and the performance of sacrifices. His aim was to live in accordance with the religious conceptions of his father. One who is zealously religious would of course demand that his children lead the same mode of life, either by force or by persuasion. It is natural that he should have tried to convert his brethren and their children to the same religious conduct.

In the story of Micah it is narrated that he made an *ephod* and *teraphim*, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest (Judges 17.5). We may rest assured that Micah was not the inventor of such a custom of consecrating one of the members of the family as a priest in a family-sanctuary, and that such a custom was general and old. It is natural that the member selected for a priestly office was one who showed special aptitude for such a

function, as religious fervor, moral conduct, and contrite spirit. May we not assume that the same custom prevailed also in the family of the Patriarch Jacob in Egypt? They certainly had a family-sanctuary. Could there be anything more reasonable than to select as priest the most pious member among them, to whom religion was the only aim in life? His father's curse did not lower him in the esteem of his tribe, and they may have deeply sympathized with him. We must bear in mind that the very crime, for which he was so bitterly denounced by his father, showed a deep moral sense. Besides, he was not so much to blame, as he was under the influence of his elder brother Simeon and thus misguided by him. It may also be questioned whether the brethren of Levi thought on this matter like their father, and did not in their heart fully approve of the deed of Simeon and Levi against Shechem. As duly installed priest, he considered it his duty to watch over the spiritual welfare of his brethren and their families that they should walk in the ways of their ancestors. Being a priest, his children were bound to know more about priestly functions than the other members of his tribes, and it was natural that they should have succeeded him in the priestly office. If he and his children served in a priestly capacity, the consequence was that the priesthood became an hereditary office of his descendants, and they developed into a priestly caste. Such a development was aided and expected under the influence of environment, seeing that the Egyptians possessed an hereditary priestly caste. In the curse of his father to be scattered among the tribes of Israel, Levi may have seen a blessing in disguise, as thereby they could make their religious influence felt among the other tribes. This could not have been the case, if his tribe should have lived separated from the other tribes in its own territory. He may have forced it upon his children and their descendants to live in accordance with the curse of his father. We have referred to Jonadab the ancestor of the Rechabites

who commanded his children not to drink wine, not to build houses, not to sow seed, not to plant vineyards, nor to have any, but to live in tents, and his descendants adopted such a life (Jer. 35.1-17). The same may have been the case with regard to the descendants of Levi. Thus strictly in accordance with biblical traditions we understand the development of the Tribe of Levi into the priestly caste of Israel.

With regard to Simeon, there is scarcely any room for doubt that this tribe was almost annihilated shortly after the conquest of Canaan. The opening chapter of the Book of Judges narrates: "And Judah said unto his brother Simeon: Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot; and Simeon went with him." There it is recorded that during this campaign Jerusalem was conquered, its inhabitants were killed, and the city was set on fire (1.8). Thus according to this historical source, Jerusalem was conquered by the united forces of Judah and Simeon. But it is a well known fact that Jerusalem did not become a part of the land of Israel before the reign of David (II Sam. 5.6-9). The statement of Judges (1.21) which reads: "And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwelt with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day," and its variant found in the Book of Joshua (15.63): "And as for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwelt with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day," do not mean to say that Jerusalem was in possession of Israel at the period of the conquest of Canaan. Both these statements refer to the conquest of Jerusalem by David, who did not expell the Jebusites, and it was inhabited also by both Judah and Benjamin. The very expression "unto this day," that is, in the time of the authors, the Jebusites were still a part of the inhabitants

of Jerusalem. We know that the Jebusite prince Araunah continued to dwell in Jerusalem after it had been conquered by David (II Sam. 24.18). It is further noteworthy that in the historical records of Judges, the territory of Judah is described, and there is nothing said about the territory of Simeon.

Therefore, we may with all certainty maintain that after the conquest of Jerusalem this city was apportioned to the tribe of Simeon as his lot. They held this city and its surroundings in possession for some time. But the Simeonites may have inherited the violent temper of their ancestor, and treated the conquered Jebusites in a high-handed manner. On the other hand, the Jebusites were a subdivision of the Hittite-Aryans. This is seen from the name of its prince during the Amarna period *Arad-He-pa* "the servant of the goddess *Hepa*," and we know that *Hepa* was a Hittite goddess. As Hittites, the Jebusites were of a warlike nature. Be that as it may, the Jebusites re-asserted themselves and re-conquered Jerusalem and its vicinity. On this occasion the tribe of Simeon that held it in possession was almost annihilated. Due to this re-conquest of Jerusalem, Judah had become separated from the other tribes by a Canaanitic belt. This of course explains why neither Judah nor Simeon are referred to in the Song of Deborah. Nor did Judah play any part during the period of the Judges, until the time of Samson. The oppression of the Philistines who extended their dominion over the whole land of Canaan, over the Israelites and Canaanites alike, was bound to remove the barrier that separated Israel from Judah, and therefore this tribe appeared again in the affairs of Israel.

Small remnants of the tribe of Simeon that saved themselves found a refuge among the Judeans, where they were given a number of localities. This fact is clearly stated in the Book of Joshua where it is said with regard to the tribe of Simeon: "And their inheritance was in the midst of the

inheritance of Judah" (19.1). The compiler of Joshua accounts for this fact, because "the portion of the children of Judah was too much for them; therefore the children of Simeon had inheritance in the midst of their inheritance" (ibid. 19.9). He evidently did not know the real reason for this fact, that the presence of Simeonites among the Judeans was not because it was their allotted portion but was merely a matter of hospitality offered to them by the Judeans in their dire condition. This is obvious from the fact that the same localities found in the portion of Judah (ibid. 15.20-62) we find again assigned to Simeon (ibid. 19.1-9). The tribe of Simeon lived in these localities *among the tribe of Judah*. These localities were not their property and they were there practically strangers enjoying the hospitality of the Judeans. However, it is very likely that in the course of time the Judeans did not like the notion of having the Simeonites as their permanent guests. They naturally multiplied and needed these farms for their own people. And therefore we may well assume that from time to time a good many of the Simeonites emigrated from this territory and sought hospitality among the other tribes where they had the status of strangers. Thus they were actually "scattered in Israel." As a matter of fact, in the time of the monarchy, they must have shrunk to such a small number that there is no reference to them as being one of the tribes of the kingdom of Judah. The First Book of Chronicles (4.38-43) records two emigrations of the Simeonites, and there is no reason for doubting the historicity of these records. "These mentioned by name were princes in their families; and their fathers' houses increased greatly. And they went to the entrance of Gedor, even unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks. And they found fat pasture and good, and the land was wide, and quiet, and peaceable; for they that dwelt there aforetime were of Ham. And these written by name came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and smote their

tents, and the Meunim that were found there, and destroyed them utterly, unto this day, and dwelt in their stead; because there was pasture there for their flocks. And some of them, even of the children of Simeon, five hundred men, went to mount Seir. . . . And they smote the remnant of the Amalekites that escaped, and dwelt there unto this day."

Our conception that Jerusalem after having been allotted to the tribe of Simeon as their inheritance was re-conquered by the Jebusites and thereby the tribe of Judah became separated from the other tribes of Israel solves a very important historical problem concerning the high-priestly office in the temple of Shiloh. This office went down by primogeniture. So Eleazar was the successor of Aaron and he was succeeded by his son Phinehas. The First Book of Chronicles (5.30-41) gives a complete genealogy from Aaron to Jehozadak. We should thus believe that there was no break in the succession, that the successors of Phinehas continued to hold the office of high priest in the temple of Shiloh until its destruction by the Philistines. But coming to the period of Samuel we find there a high priest in Shiloh, Eli, who was not a descendant of Eleazar, who in fact was a descendant of Ithamar, the younger brother of Eleazar (I Chron. 24.3, 6, 31). How can we explain the transfer of the high-priestly dignity from the family of Eleazar to that of Ithamar? Shall we indeed contend that there were contradictory traditions concerning this matter? There is no difficulty for the modern critics who believe neither in the existence of Eleazar nor in that of Ithamar, as the references to them belong to the priestly writings which they hold to be of a pseudepigraphical character. But if we do not subscribe to this radical view, the problem demands a solution.

This brings us back to the Levitical towns. While the towns given to the Levites were situated among the Northern tribes (Joshua 21.20-40), those of the Aaronides were

exclusively situated in the territories of Judah and Benjamin (ibid. 21.4, 9-19), though the compiler of these historical records, in accordance with his own conception, adds to these territories also that of the tribe of Simeon. However, nothing is said there concerning the division of these priestly towns between the two families, Eleazar and Ithamar. Nevertheless there can be no doubt that the cities of Ithamar were situated in the territory of Benjamin. We know that Abiathar who was jointly high priest with Zadok during the reign of David belonged to the family of Ithamar (I Chron. 24.3, 6, 31). He was a native of Nob, where was the chief sanctuary after the destruction of Shiloh, and his father officiated there as high priest (I Sam. 21.2; 22.11). This priestly town was situated in the territory of Benjamin (Nehem. 11.32). Thus Abiathar, a descendant of Ithamar, was a native of a Benjamite priestly town. It seems strange that Nob is not enumerated among the Levitical towns. But it may have been a recent foundation, after the establishment of the monarchy. When this priestly town was destroyed at the command of Saul, and Abiathar had no longer a home, he was settled in the priestly town Anathoth by David where he was given an estate. This is seen from the words of Solomon who said to him, after he had sided with Adonijah against Solomon: "Get thee to Anathoth, unto thy own fields; for thou art deserving of death; but I will not at this time put thee to death, because thou didst bear the ark of the Lord God before David my father, and because thou wast afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted" (I Kings 2.26). Anathoth was one of the priestly towns situated in Benjamin.

If the priestly towns of Ithamar were situated in the territory of Benjamin, it stands to reason that those of the family of Eleazar were in the territory of Judah. But the central sanctuary of Shiloh was in the territory of Ephraim. Considering the close connection between temple and palace in antiquity, as we have already pointed out, it was

quite natural that the seat of the chief sanctuary should be within the territory of the tribe of Joshua. For the same reason after the accession of Saul the chief sanctuary was established in the territory of Benjamin first at Nob, and after its destruction, at Gibeon (I Kings 3.4). Therefore was David so anxious to have the chief sanctuary in his own domain Jerusalem, which he had conquered from the Jebusites. If so, the high priests Eleazar and Phinehas, whose home was in Judah, lived at some distance from the chief sanctuary of Shiloh where they had to officiate. This was not a great difficulty. We may assume that they officiated only during the high festivals, when the people came to appear before the Lord, and they repaired also to the sanctuary during these seasons, while at other times the performance of sacrifices was done by substitutes who may have belonged to the house of Ithamar. Now it is stated that Eleazar was buried in Gibeath-Phinehas, which was given to Phinehas in mount Ephraim (Joshua 24.33). This locality was evidently not a Levitical town, as it is not enumerated among them. As a matter of fact, Shiloh was not a Levitical town either. The situation of Gibeath-Phinehas is unknown. But we may conjecture that it was an estate situated within walking-distance of Shiloh, and since the home-town of Phinehas was far away, he was given this estate to dwell there with his family during the high festivals. But when Judah became separated from the other tribes by a Canaanitic belt, after the re-conquest of Jerusalem by the Jebusites, the house of Eleazar was cut off from the chief sanctuary of Shiloh, and the legitimate high priest could no longer repair to it to officiate there, and so it was natural that the high-priestly succession reverted to the line of the younger brother of Eleazar, Ithamar, and this readily explains why this line were the high priests of Israel during the period of the Judges.

However, if that was the case, how could Chronicles give a complete genealogy of the high priests belonging to the

house of Eleazar, which means that there was no break in the high-priestly succession of this line? It would seem quite incredible that Judah should have been separated from Israel during several centuries and should not have had a chief sanctuary of its own. Considering that the chief priestly city of the line of Eleazar was Hebron (Joshua 21.11, 13), we may rest assured that it was there where the Judean chief sanctuary was situated. It was there that the high priests of the line of Eleazar officiated. Chronicles is thus right in presenting a complete genealogy of Eleazar's high-priestly line. When David had become king of Judah, and his capital was Hebron (II Sam. 2.4, etc.), he found there the high priest Zadok officiating in the chief sanctuary, and he recognized his right to the high-priestly dignity by primogeniture, as a descendant of Eleazar. He did not depose Abiathar who was after all a descendant of a long line of high priests, and besides having been his companion in misfortune, as Solomon expressed himself. Nevertheless he regarded Zadok as being the legitimate high priest, and he is everywhere mentioned before Abiathar (II Sam. 8.17; 15.29, 35; 17.15; 19.12; 20.25). That there was a sanctuary in Hebron is seen from the fact that it was there where David made a covenant with Israel "before the Lord" (ibid. 5.3), and that Absalom went to this city "to pay there his vow" (ibid. 15.7). When David removed his capital to Jerusalem, the sanctuary of Hebron was of little use to him, as Hebron was 22 miles away from Jerusalem, while the sanctuary of Gibeon, situated at a distance of 4 or 5 miles, was much nearer; it is natural that the high priest Zadok should have been transferred to the latter sanctuary (I Chron. 16.39). This was for Abiathar adding insult to injury to establish at a Benjamite sanctuary that rightly belonged to the house of Ithamar a descendant of the house of Eleazar as a high priest. He may have rightly claimed that the primogeniture right of the house of Eleazar was cancelled by the statute of limitation. There-

fore it is no surprise that Abiathar sided with Adonijah who may have promised him the exclusive right to the office of high priest in Israel.

We return now to our former subject with regard to the acquisition of property by the priesthood. It might seem strange and almost cruel that the Lawgiver of Israel should not have given the priests ample means to make them independent of the people or the right to acquire landed property outside of their Levitical towns. We should think that spiritual leaders of independent means could exercise a much greater influence upon the people than those dependent upon their charity. However, the very preservation of Israel's religion may be safely ascribed to this measure of the Lawgiver. In Egypt, Babylonia, and many other countries, the corruption of the priesthood was exclusively due to their wealth. In Babylonia the priests were the largest owners of land. In Egypt under the 18th Dynasty and afterwards, the priests were actually the only owners of landed property of large dimensions. We need not assume that they acquired these estates by wrong means. In all periods and in all countries, there were pious persons who willed or donated their estates to the temples. Consequently in the course of time the temples became the most wealthy institution, and the priests could lead a life of leisure and had ample means to indulge in all pleasures. Their property acquired in the name and for the honor of the deity was sacrosanct, and the government could not touch it or use it for the welfare of the country. We know that the same happened in mediaeval times, that the priests of the rich cloisters led a life of pleasure and luxury.

From Leviticus (27.14-24) we learn that also in Israel it happened that pious people donated their estates to the sanctuary. It appears that the sanctuary might acquire landed property and keep it for ever, under certain conditions (ibid. 27.20), while individual priests could not ac-

quire it outside of the Levitical towns, as in the latter case it would be removal of property from one tribe to another. But the same may have been true in Babylonia and Egypt. The property did not belong to the individual priests but to their temples. However, we must keep in mind that in Judah the treasures of the temple of Jerusalem were always at the disposal of the government and could be freely used for the defense of the country. As we have already pointed out, this temple was practically a royal institution. Of Asa it is stated: "He took all the silver and all the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants; and Asa sent them to Ben-Hadad, the son of Tabrimmon the son of Hezion, king of Aram" (I Kings 15.18). Similarly it is recorded of Jehoshaphat: "He took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold that was found in the treasures of the house of the Lord, and of the king's house, and sent it to Hazael king of Aram; and he went away from Jerusalem" (II Kings 12.19). Ahaz did the same in taking all the gold and silver that was found in the house of the Lord and in the king's house and sent it as a tribute to Tiglathpileser (*ibid.* 16.8). This had been done also by Hezekiah who gave Sennacherib all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord and in the king's house. He even cut off the gold from the doors of the temple and gave it to this king of Assyria (*ibid.* 18.15-16). Nothing like that is known of any nation in antiquity.

Considering that the votive-offerings in the temple were looked upon as national property stored in the temple to be used in cases of emergency, it goes without saying that the priests were held responsible for their integrity and could not use them for themselves. It happened also that the temple was plundered by foreign enemies of all its

valuables, as did Shishak king of Egypt (I Kings 14.26). A similar event occurred under the reign of Amaziah, when Jehoash king of Israel took away all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the Lord and in the treasures of the king's house (II Kings 14.14). Thus the priests of Jerusalem did not possess any means for indulging in luxuries. In the house of Zadok, their only source of income, outside of its possessions in the priestly towns, were the sacrifices and other priestly emoluments. We must bear in mind that the house of Zadok must have consisted of thousands of priests since the days of David, and that most of the people did not come on the high festivals to Jerusalem to appear there before the Lord, but went instead to the local sanctuaries. Therefore it does not seem likely that the priests of Jerusalem could lead a life of comfort on their income. This may have been the case of a few priests of high rank, as the high priest and the chief priests of the priestly divisions. But the living of the others was more or less of a frugal character. It is very likely that many of them had to eke out their income by teaching the children of the wealthy classes, as we have said, and Micah accuses them of teaching for hire. Thus they were far from being well off materially and independent, and their mode of life did not tend to promote vices of the kind that prevailed among the nobility. If the conduct of not a few of them was not above reproach, it was due to their poverty that dimmed their moral courage when dealing with men of wealth. But this was a minor evil in comparison with the influence of riches which were always conducive to immoral conduct.

Being priests of Jahveh, their fortunes rose and fell with the people's faithfulness or faithlessness toward the God of their ancestors. Not possessing any share and inheritance in the land, it was in their own interest to keep the people faithful to the religion of their ancestors, as otherwise they would have lost their position and their

only source of subsistence. To be sure, they could have become idolatrous priests. But such a priesthood was not hereditary. It was not a position of a privileged class, and any one could aspire to it. Competition was probably keen in the syncretistic sanctuaries. Howsoever poor they may have been, there is no doubt that they were proud of their priestly rank and descent, and considered themselves superior to the people at large. Therefore they could not hire themselves out as laborers to earn their bread with the sweat of their brow. It is even questionable, whether they were fit for manual labor. Considering the low esteem in which tradesmen who proverbially were regarded as swindlers were held, as Hosea expressed himself: "As for the trafficker, the balances of deceit are in his hand, he loves to oppress" (12.8), it is scarcely conceivable that the priests should have engaged in commerce. They were raised in a scholarly environment for a priestly career, and were fit for nothing else. Thus they faced starvation during a period of apostasy, and we may be sure that they did everything in their power to prevent such a calamity.

It was a foregone conclusion that Israel on their entrance into Canaan would come under the influence of the more cultured natives and would gradually adopt their manner of living and also their kind of worship, as it actually did happen. Moses could have foreseen it, even if he had not been a God-inspired prophet. This was always the case in all ages when a primitive people conquered a civilized country, that in the course of time they are conquered by the civilization of the natives. Instances in antiquity are not wanting. It was the case of the Semites who superseded the Sumerians, of the Cassites who superseded the Babylonian Semites, of the Hyksos who invaded Egypt, and others. Moses had to provide for such an emergency, so that his labors should not be in vain. Israel's religion in Canaan was bound to disappear. It could have survived only if Canaan had been an uninhabited land.

Deuteronomy therefore decreed the destruction of all its inhabitants: "But of the cities of these peoples that the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth; but thou shalt utterly destroy them . . . that they teach you not to do after their own abominations, which they have done unto their gods, and so you sin against the Lord your God" (Deut. 20.16-18). However, there was little hope that the Israelites would be able and willing to carry out this command. Moses himself would never have decreed such a wholesale massacre, if he had not experienced during the forty years of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness how easily they were inclined to stray away from the Lord. In the earlier years he had not yet this experience. Therefore in Exodus (23.29-30) we find that Moses expected the expulsion of the Canaanites to be a gradual process: "I will not drive them out from before thee in one year, lest the land become desolate, and the beasts of the field multiply against thee. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased and inherit the land." This actually happened. It took centuries to make Israel masters of Canaan. But how did it happen that during these ages Israel's religion still survived in such an environment?

There was only one way of preventing Israel's religion from disintegration, to establish a priestly organization the members of which should neither possess a tribal territory, in order to be forced to dwell among the other tribes and their activity would not be of a local character, nor should they have a share and inheritance among them, so that they would have to gain their subsistence from their priestly office. For the preservation of their own existence they would be forced to disseminate their religious teachings in Israel, as otherwise they would lose their position and thereby their means of livelihood. The natural law of environment that would lead Israel away from the religion of Jahveh would thereby be counteracted by an-

other natural law, the priestly struggle for existence which would prevent the complete disappearance of the Jahveh-religion from among the Israelites. By establishing such a priestly organization which would actually be poverty-stricken through its whole existence, it was natural that no tribe should have aspired to such an office which would condemn them to eternal penury and dependence upon charity. Therefore in bestowing this priestly dignity upon his own tribe which made them spiritually superior to all other tribes, it could not have excited their envy.

However, as a matter of fact, there was no need for Moses to establish a new priestly organization for Israel, as we have seen that the Levites had occupied exactly the same position in Egypt centuries before his advent. His own position was no doubt chiefly due to having been a member of the priestly caste. This was merely a re-confirmation and legalization of their ancient position. Such a re-confirmation was necessary. We must bear in mind that an establishment of a priesthood in Israel was not in harmony with the divine declaration with regard to the position of Israel as "a Kingdom of Priests and a Holy Nation" (Ex. 19.6), if they would be faithful to the Lord's covenant. A kingdom of priests is in no need of a special priestly class. Any member of the house of Israel should have been entitled to officiate in a priestly capacity. But this position was of a conditional nature. Israel in Canaan fully accepted this position, in considering themselves the Lord's "Chosen People," but disregarded the condition attached to it. Moses himself at the beginning of his religious activity may have intended to abolish the prerogatives of his tribe and bestow the priestly office upon the first-born in Israel, that is to say, upon the heads of the families. In accordance with this intention, the first-born males were sanctified to the Lord (ibid. 13.2). It is very likely that the young men of the children of Israel who offered burnt-offerings and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the

Lord preparatory to the covenant (*ibid.* 24.5) were of the first-born children, in accordance with the traditional interpretation. From the repeated reference to "priests" in the narrative of the Revelation (*ibid.* 19.22, 24) we may gather that the Levitical tribe still exercised its priestly functions at that period. They are designated: "those that come near to the Lord." But on this occasion they did not play any part. The first-born who offered the sacrifices were the representatives of the tribes of Israel, and thereby they became in fact "a kingdom of priests."

However, seeing how easily Israel could be persuaded to turn away from the Lord, Moses abandoned his intention of abolishing the priestly organization of Israel. After the people had made a golden calf, and Moses called out: "Whoso is on the Lord's side, let him come unto me" (*ibid.* 32.26), the only people responding to his call, who placed themselves at his disposal and gathered themselves together unto him, were the sons of Levi. We may notice by the way that the very fact that he called to his assistance those who remained faithful to the Lord indicates that he must have encountered resistance among the people who refused to abandon this kind of worship, though the biblical tradition is silent on this point. It was on that occasion that the Levitical tribe was re-consecrated to the Lord and re-confirmed in the priestly position that it had held for ages, as Moses said to the Levites: "Consecrate yourselves to-day to the Lord, for every man hath been against his son, and against his brother; that He may also bestow a blessing upon you this day" (*ibid.* 32.29). But if Moses did not have any intention of retaining the priestly organization, before Israel had made the golden calf, it goes without saying that the legislation concerning the consecration of Aaron and his sons as priests, and along with it that of the erection of the Tabernacle, and its implements, must be dated after the making of the golden calf, though in our present text it is placed before that event.

Now it is true, according to the modern critics, the narrative of the golden calf belongs to the Jehovistic and Deuteronomistic Documents, while the ordinances of the Tabernacle and consecration of the priesthood are assigned to the Priestly Documents. But even if, for the sake of argument, we should admit the critical position, is it conceivable that the priestly author or authors should have completely ignored the narrative of the golden calf? Now in the ordinances concerning the consecration of the Levites, which of course belong to the Priestly Documents, there it is said: "For all the first-born among the children of Israel are Mine. . . . And I have taken the Levites instead of all the first-born among the children of Israel" (Num. 8.17-18). Why does not the priestly author give any reason why the Lord should have taken the Levites instead of the first-born in Israel? Thus it is evident that no explanation of this fact was necessary, since the narrative of the golden calf and the part the Levites played on this occasion was well known. We see then that the priestly author did by no means ignore the narrative of the golden calf. Therefore we may rightly contend that the ordinances of Exodus 25-31.11 chronologically belong after the narrative of the making of the golden calf. We may apply to it the saying of the Rabbis: "There is no chronological order in the events or ordinances of the Mosaic Books."

However, it may well be that originally it was not the intention of Moses to deprive the Levites of all share and inheritance in the land of Israel among their brethren. Though scattered among the tribes and not possessing any tribal territory, the individual families might have received an inheritance among the several tribes where they were settled. But it indeed seems that the recognition of the priestly rank of the Levites did excite the envy of the other tribes. As long as the Israelites sojourned in the wilderness, none of the tribes possessed landed property. On this point the Levites were not in a worse position than the other

tribes. Yet as priesthood it occupied a higher rank than the others. This was bound to excite jealousy. From the story of Korah's revolt (Num. 16.1-35) we gather that the superior position of the Levites excited the envy of some people among other tribes. Now the modern critics, in accordance with the Documentary Hypothesis, hold that this narrative constitutes a composition of two heterogeneous events. The earlier account narrated the rebellion of Dathan and Abiram against the authority of Moses, and this is assigned to the Jahvistic Document, and the younger account which tells of Korah's revolt against the higher rank of Moses and Aaron is taken to be of priestly origin and treated as invention to account for the inferior position of the Levites. The complaint: "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them; wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?" (ibid. 16.3) is assigned to the priestly stratum of the narrative, and thus was uttered by the Levites. But is it conceivable that the Levites should have raised such an accusation? Would not such a complaint have rebounded against their own position as part of the priesthood though of an inferior rank than that of Moses and Aaron? A complaint of that kind would have been in place if coming from outsiders, in maintaining that Israel was in no need of a priestly organization, and not from Levitical priests. Thus to put such a complaint in the mouth of Korah and his partisans would be utterly preposterous. If, however, this accusation was raised by the non-Levites Dathan, Abiram, and their partisans, how could Moses have answered them, "Hear now, ye sons of Levi: Is it but a small thing unto you that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of the Lord, to bring you near to Himself . . . and will ye seek the priesthood also?" (ibid. 16.8-10).

Furthermore, if this was the complaint of Korah and his Levitical partisans, why is there nothing said about the

complaint of Dathan and Abiram? As a matter of fact, Korah played a very insignificant part in this rebellion, as the people at large were not in the least interested in the claim of the Levites to the priesthood. They objected to the priestly organization altogether. Moreover, very few Levites sided with Korah, and he was not even supported by his own sons, as it is stated: "The sons of Korah died not" (Num. 26.11). Korah evidently went over into the camp of the rebels and perished with them. Therefore in Deuteronomy (11.6) there is only a reference to the death of Dathan and Abiram, the real leaders in this rebellion, and not to Korah. He was evidently envious of the superior positions of Moses and Aaron, but alone he was powerless. He could hope for success only if united with outsiders and claim for all of them equality as priests. The 250 men who sided with him were chiefs of clans, "the elect men of the assembly, men of renown," upon whom he prevailed to claim the prerogatives of the priestly office, as Moses had intended to confer upon them. Moses knew Korah's intention; that his revolt was not due to his sense of justice and equality but to his ambition, longing after the priesthood. He hoped that as one of the leaders in this rebellion the mantle of Moses or Aaron would by hook or crook fall upon him. Therefore Moses addressed himself to him and his partisans, rebuking them for longing after the rank of priesthood. We see that here also, as elsewhere, the Documentary Hypothesis raises difficulties which from a traditional point of view are easily explained.

Due to this envy, which Moses experienced at the time of Korah's revolt, he decreed that the Levites should have no share and no inheritance in the land of Israel. It is indeed clearly stated that all the ordinances with regard to the position of the priesthood and of the Levites were the outcome of this revolt (Num. 17.17-28; 18.1-32). Thus from a material point of view, the entrance of Israel into Canaan would not improve the conditions of the priestly

organization. These ordinances at once stilled all complaints and removed all envy. None of the tribes would have accepted such a dignity which would have imposed upon the holders eternal penury and dependence upon charity, as we have already observed. We see then the importance of the Mosaic measure for the preservation of Israel's religion in imposing upon the Levites the restriction of not being able to acquire property. Their condition was indeed deplorable if the people turned away from the Lord. It stands to reason that the idolators supported their own idolatrous priests. If they were used to giving tithes, they certainly did not give them to the priests of Jahveh. After the division of the kingdom and Jeroboam's reforms, many of the Levites settled in the Northern Israelitish Levitical towns migrated into Judah (II Chron. 11.13-14). The competition for receiving tithes must have been very keen there, and it is unlikely that a poor country like Judah could support such a large number of Levites. Thus there can be no doubt that the priests and Levites, though as spiritual leaders they were more or less respected, belonged actually to the poorest of the people, even during a period of prosperity, and the most miserable in a period of adversity.

The question now arises: Is Levi's blessing by Moses in conformity with the conditions of the Levitical priests? It goes without saying that the modern critics do not see in the Blessing of Moses prophecies predicting the future conditions of the tribes of Israel, as they neither believe in the possibility that a prophet should have been able to foretell events that would happen in the distant future, nor do they believe in the Mosaic authorship of this Blessing. They maintain that it reflects the actual conditions of Israel in a certain period to which this Blessing is assigned. However, no matter whether it is true prophecy or a description of actual conditions, we must find a period in which these conditions are reflected. Does that hold true

of Levi's Blessing? This Blessing reads: "And of Levi he said: Thy Thummim and thy Urim be with Thy holy man, whom Thou didst prove at Massah, with whom Thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah; who said of his father and of his mother: 'I have not seen him'; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew he his own children; for they have observed Thy word and keep Thy covenant. They shall teach Jacob Thine ordinances, and Israel Thy law; they shall put incense before Thee, and whole burnt-offering upon Thine altar. Bless, O Lord, his substance, and accept the work of his hands; smite through the loins of them that rise up against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again" (Deut. 33.8-11). Now does the concluding part of this blessing harmonize with the actual conditions of the Levites? It says: "Bless, O Lord, his substance." Was substance characteristic of the Levites at any period? The words: "and accept the work of his hands" can certainly not refer to offerings. It cannot but refer to people who toil with their hands. And who were the enemies that were rising against the Levites and hated them? If the priests had enemies who bitterly persecuted them, history is quite silent about it. It certainly cannot mean idolatrous Israel! There is no indication that they ever persecuted the priests of Jahveh. Moreover, these expressions can be applied only to a warlike tribe which has to fight for its existence and is always in danger of being overcome by its enemies. May this be applied to the Levites? Is there any allusion to their fighting qualities in Israel's history? Their ancestor Levi is certainly presented as a warrior who with his brother Simeon destroyed Shechem. But this blessing cannot refer to the tribal ancestor of the Levites. Did they inherit the warrior qualities of their ancestor? There was indeed one period in their history during which they possessed substance and showed themselves as famous warriors. This was the period of the Maccabees. If it does refer to this period, then it will be

admitted that we have here pure prophecy, as no scholar would dare to date this blessing in the Maccabean period. This is indeed Rashi's interpretation. But this would be unacceptable to modern scholars, and we are raising the question from a modern point of view.

Therefore, it is inconceivable that this verse (33.11) should have constituted the concluding part of Levi's blessing. It must refer to a well known warlike tribe which was continually fighting for its existence and was always in danger of being overthrown by its enemies. This tribe was Judah. And if so, this passage is out of place here, and should be transposed after verse 7. The blessing would thus read: "And this for Judah, and he said: Hear, O Lord, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people; his hands contend for him, and Thou shalt be a help against his adversaries. Bless, O Lord, his substance, and accept the work of his hands; smite through the loins of him that rise up against him, and of them that hate him that they shall not rise again." We have already pointed out that after the conquest of Jerusalem by the Canaanites, Judah had become separated from the other tribes by a Canaanitic belt. We may rest assured that the Canaanites tried hard to destroy it. It was surrounded by its enemies. It was fighting continually for its existence, and had no hope that its brethren would come to its assistance. It was praying to be re-united with the other tribes of Israel. It is to this period that Judah's blessing refers. It actually describes Judah's conditions word for word, and there is no difficulty whatever. Seeing that the blessing of Judah belongs to this period, therefore there is no reference to the tribe of Simeon, as it survived in the Judean territory, and as a tribe it was non-existent. This would satisfy any point of view. One may see in it true prophecy, and one may assign it to the period of Judah's separation from Israel.

Considering the material conditions of the Levitical priests, they had not the least interest in desiring the continuity of the aristocratic system upon which the constitution of the state of Judah was based. The nobility, accustomed as it was to look down with contempt upon the poor as inferior creatures and far from being religious, had not much reverence for the sacred character of the priesthood. It is not likely that they were generous in the matter of tithes, if they did give them at all. Those who openly practiced idolatry did not give them to the priests of Jahveh but to their own priests. The Levitical priests would have gladly seen the cultivated land in the hand of the common people. They of course kept quiet not to antagonize the leading classes, and in this respect were different from the prophets. But the latter were independent of the nobility, because they did not live upon charity as did the priests. However, the priests likewise protested against existing conditions by teaching the religion and history of Israel. One who had eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand, could readily perceive from their teachings that the present state of Israel was out of harmony with Israel's religion, and was bound to come to a bad end. But the leading classes, steeped in immorality and irreligion, were blind, deaf, and devoid of understanding. They perfectly well knew that in the case of an Assyrian invasion, they would be powerless to defend the independence of their country, and the common people oppressed by them would not and could not fight for their own native oppressors against the foreign invaders, as they would not be in a worse condition under Assyrian rule than they were now, as we have pointed out. But if the aristocrats should restore to the people their possessions of which they had been deprived, they could successfully repulse the foreign enemy, as the common people, if provided with arms and well trained in

warfare, were able to fight and would be willing to sacrifice everything for their own independence. But the governing classes would pay tribute to Assyria rather than free the people from their oppressive yoke and treat them as equals.

CHAPTER VII

Isaiah's family—His induction into the prophetic office—The other prophets—The interpretation of Isaiah's message—Isaiah as champion of righteousness an aristocrat—His belief in the divine right of the Davidic dynasty—His doctrine of a Remnant—"The stump of Jesse"—Deeds judged by environments—Isaiah's protest against the high position of Shebna—The cuneiform Shaphel-formation of the name *Shebna*—The first position of Shebna as a royal scribe—His enmity toward Assyria—His negotiation with Merodach-baladan—The approval of Shebna's policy by the anti-Assyrian party—Isaiah's opposition to foreign entanglements—His rise as champion of the hereditary privileges of the nobility—Shebna's successor as royal steward Eliakim—The aggravation of corruption and injustice under Shebna's stewardship—Micah's accusation of the ruling classes—The removal of Shebna as royal steward—A parallel between the Judean Isaiah and the Athenian Solon—Democracy and Autocracy—A Dictator—The autocratic Messiah—Isaiah's belief in Hezekiah as king of righteousness—The oracle against the Philistines—Biblical chronology—The date of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah—The date of Hezekiah's illness—The land of Immanuel—Isaiah as tutor of Hezekiah—The military force of this king—His religious conduct—His character—Isaiah's disappointment—His belief in the destiny of the house of David still strong—Micah's expectation of a righteous ruler—Hezekiah's alliance with Egypt—The conquest of Egypt the chief aim of Assyria—Egypt's claim to the Syrian dominions—The policy of the Egyptian kings—The safety of Egypt—The leading classes in the Western states bribed by Egypt—Hezekiah subsidized by Egypt—His embassy to Egypt—His disloyal nobility—The Ethiopian 25th Dynasty—Hezekiah's intention of entering into an alliance with Egypt during Sargon's reign—Isaiah's oracle against Egypt—Egypt's intrigues with Hezekiah after Sargon's death—Shebna's negotiations with Merodach-baladan—The latter's embassy to Hezekiah—Its purpose—Hezekiah's boast of his resources—The danger of this boast—Hezekiah concluding alliances without consulting the prophet—The prophet ridiculed—Hezekiah's implicit trust in the Lord—The corruption of the nobility known to the king—An autocratic state conceived to be judged by the conduct of the king—This conception generally held—Judah's condition after Sennacherib's retreat—Hezekiah's trust in the Lord in vain—The religious condition aggravated by this conception—The second illness of Hezekiah—Hezekiah's tribute to Sennacherib—Isaiah's description of this period—The belief in the God of Israel undermined—The religious conditions under the reign of Manasseh—His hatred toward the Lord and

His votaries—An historical parallel—Josiah's zeal in his reforms—His restoration of the United Kingdom—The establishing of his reforms in Samaria—The refusal of the Ephraimitic priests to submit to the Mosaic Law—The return of Ephraimites to the Mosaic religion before Josiah's reform—The two periods of Jeremiah's activity—His activity among the Ephraimites—His collision with the Ephraimitic priesthood—His appeal to Josiah—His activity under the rule of this king—His return to Judah after the death of Josiah—His activity among the Ephraimites not in vain—Religious ideas disseminated by force—Josiah's covenant imposed upon the ruling classes—The seed sown by Manasseh—The fate of the most righteous king—The re-appearance of idolatry and corruption—The people's conception of religion—The battle of Megiddo—Josiah's military exploit—His perfect trust upon the Lord—His ignorance of the real conditions—His challenge—The power of the Lord tested—The real event of Megiddo—Josiah murdered—A pro-Egyptian version of this event—The religious conduct of Josiah's successors—Josiah an idealistic dreamer—The discovery of the Mosaic Code questioned—Jehoiakim's policy with regard to the Jahveh-worship—The reign of Jehoiachin—The non-recognition of Zedekiah as legitimate king.

THE prophet Isaiah, according to a rabbinical tradition emphatically expressed, was a member of the royal family, as his father Amoz was a brother of king Amaziah. In view of the fact that in cuneiform a compounded name may be abbreviated to an infinitive formation, as the infinitive form *Shūzubu* is used instead of the full names *Nergal-ushēzib* and *Mushēzib-Marduk*, who knows whether the same usage did not exist in Hebrew, so that the infinitive form of the name of Amoz was an abbreviation for the full name *Amaziah*. If so, Isaiah may have been the son of king Amaziah and the younger brother of king Uzziah. The Second Book of Chronicles (26.22) states that Isaiah wrote a complete history of Uzziah's reign. But even if we disregard these traditions and suggestions, there can be no doubt that Isaiah was a scion of one of the first families of Judah. He meets and treats both kings, Ahaz and Hezekiah, as an equal (Isa. 7.3-17; 37.6; 38.1; 39.3).

As sage and as statesman Isaiah was not inferior to the Athenian Solon. If, like the latter, he had been given by his peers unlimited powers of introducing economic and

constitutional reforms in his country, he would have saved the state and his activity might have been even more enduring than that of Solon in Athens. But it was not the nobility that called upon him to save the state from complete destruction. He was entrusted by the Lord in a sublime theophany with a mission to the people of Judah to open their eyes, their ears, and their hearts, that they should see the defects of their state, that they should hear of the danger that threatens the Western states, and should perceive their precarious conditions. The nobility would not listen to the other prophets, whom they despised as members of the lower classes, and turned away from them with disdain. But Isaiah, as far as wealth and descent were concerned, was their equal, and it was natural to expect that his mission would be more successful than that of the others. In being inducted into the prophetic office, Isaiah was not entrusted with any special message to the people. He was merely consecrated as a prophet of the Lord to advise and lead them. In his vision, the prophet heard the voice of the Lord asking: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (6.8). This means: the mission entrusted to the other prophets was in vain, since the nobility looked with contempt upon men of the lower classes who tried to lead them on the right way, as they would not be guided by men who were not their equals. Thereupon the prophet replied: "Here am I, send me." He meant to say: they will not despise me, and will not feel humbled by being guided by one who in every respect is their equal, if not their superior.

Now comes the appeal to the common sense of the governing classes that they should not blind themselves to the precarious conditions of the state, that they should not shut their ears to the tidings of the stirring events that were happening just at present, and that they should not close their hearts to advice and counsel to save the state. Thus the Lord answered the prophet: "Go and say unto this

people: *Ye must hear, and it may be that ye will understand; ye must see, and it may be that ye will perceive.*" That is to say: there may be a chance that the people will listen to thee more than to the other prophets, but it is a mere chance which is rather slim, judging by past experiences. It is a mere pretense on their part that they ignore the bearers of the divine messages, on account of their personality and associations with the lower classes. It is not the personality of the prophets which they disdain but their divine messages. "For this people *hath made fat its heart, and hath made heavy its ears, and hath shut its eyes*; lest it see with its eyes, and hear with its ears, and understand with its heart, it return and be healed." This means: the nobility knows quite well the remedy, which consisted in parting with their special privileges, and establishing the state upon the democratic system of equality, as it was in former days. But this class would lose the independence of their country and become abject subjects of Assyria rather than grant equal rights to their poor brethren and thereby no longer be able to treat them as their servants and to oppress them. The remedy they regarded as much worse than the disease from which the state suffers.

Thereupon the prophet asked: "O Lord, how long?" Will they never be able to see the error of their ways, perceiving that their state is headed for destruction? The Lord's reply was to be expected. If a state is based upon the system of injustice, and the leading classes will not renounce their positions and privileges, such a state is inevitably doomed. Only a complete destruction of all its foundations and the removal of the people from the state, so that they never could come back and build the state up upon the same system, may give a chance to the remnant that was free from these defects to build up a new state on the system of justice and equality. If the stock of a tree is in a healthy condition and not rotten to the core, even if its branches are completely cut off, it will bring forth fresh

shoots of a healthy nature. But if some of the diseased branches still remain, the new shoots will be affected by them and will likewise become diseased. Nothing must remain of the leaves and branches. So also if of the leading classes who caused the destruction of the state a tenth should remain, it must also be consumed, as this tenth might bring back the former conditions. This is meant by the Lord's reply: "Until cities be waste without inhabitant, and houses without man, and the land become utterly waste. And the Lord have removed men far away, and the forsaken places be many in the midst of the land. And if there be a tenth in it, it shall again be eaten up; as a terebinth, and as an oak, whose stock remaineth, when they cast their leaves, so the holy seed shall be the stock thereof" (6.11-13). According to this interpretation, the prophet referred only to Judah and not to Israel, as the social conditions among the Northern tribes were totally different. There the ruling classes were not of an hereditary and stable nature as in Judah, but often changed with the rise of new dynasties.

In the fourth chapter we have dwelt on this theophany and shown all the difficulties which it involves, the more so if we accept the modern view that Isaiah was entrusted with the mission of announcing to Israel their condemnation, which was irrevocable. Our interpretation, however, based upon slight emendations which do not touch the consonantal text, removes all difficulties. Isaiah in this theophany was not commissioned to lead Israel away, as it is generally taken, but on the contrary, to listen to his divine message, and thereby be saved, though there was not much hope that they would be persuaded to mend their way. If this hope was not realized, the destruction of the state and its re-establishment on the system of justice and equality was the only remedy. However, the prophet's expectation that there would not be inequality in the future state of Israel did not come true, as we have seen. The descendants of the

pre-exilic nobility continued to rule the people after the return from the captivity.

While Isaiah was the champion of the poor and oppressed, he was far from being a demagogue. If he had had his own way, he would have abolished all the abuses of the privileged class, and would have compelled the nobility to rule the people in accordance with the dictates of justice and righteousness. He would have restored to the people their estates of which they had been deprived by wrong means. He would have freed the Israelites that lost their liberty to their creditors and provided them with the means of gaining a livelihood in a proper way. But he would have left the nobility the right of being the leaders and counsellors of the government, which means that the government would have been still in their hands, and they would have continued to be the pillars of the state. His aim was to purge the nobility of their corruption and immorality. His demands were: "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean, put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (1.16-17). He wanted to reform the leading classes, and not to overthrow them. There was valuable metal in the nobles which in the course of time was becoming debased by the admixture of dross and alloy. If these could be removed, the metal would have its former value. Therefore the prophet said in the name of the Lord: "And I will turn My hand upon thee, and purge away thy dross as with lye, and will take away all thine alloy; and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning" (1.25-26). Even as a champion of righteousness, he remained an aristocrat, and believed that a righteous aristocracy should govern the people. As a matter of fact, in the most democratic states, the real rulers are not the people at large but a few leaders who advise the people

how they should vote, and the government is practically in their hands.

As an aristocrat, Isaiah was a most faithful adherent of the house of David, and firmly believed in its divine right to rule over Israel. How highly he thought of the founder of this dynasty can be seen from his conviction that Jerusalem could not come into the hand of Sennacherib for the sake of David the servant of the Lord (37. 35). Therefore it is quite natural that he should have been convinced of the continuation of David's dynasty, even after the downfall of the state of Judah. Even if we did not have his Messianic predictions, or if we should not assign them to this prophet, as some modern scholars hold, he must have had some conception of the preservation of the house of David after the destruction of the kingdom of Judah. Bearing in mind that the doctrine of a Remnant is fundamental with Isaiah, he obviously believed that the remnant that would rebuild the state would be ruled by the house of David. This may be taken as an additional proof for assigning the Messianic prediction in chapter XI to this prophet. Just as he became convinced of the final downfall of the state, so he was certain of the re-establishment of the Davidic dynasty, when the righteous remnant, "the holy seed," will have restored the state. It is preposterous to point out that the term "the stump of Jesse" reflects the fact that the Judean monarchy is no more, and this proves the exilic or post-exilic origin of this Messianic prediction. How could he have expressed himself differently, seeing that he referred to a re-establishment of the monarchy after it had fallen down? The prophet surely could not have meant to say that even before the fall of the state, that was now full of corruption, the condition of which was hopeless, an ideal king would arise who would establish ideal conditions as described in this Messianic prediction! Such a prediction would contradict the contents of the vision of his induction into the

prophetic office. The remnant that would survive was expected to conform to all prophetic postulates and to materialize all prophetic ideals. The king of such an ideal people was bound to be of a more superior quality than that of his subjects. His description of the qualities of such a king is therefore by no means exaggerated. If this prediction never came true, it was the fault of the remnant that did not live up to the prophetic expectations, as we repeatedly pointed out, and was far removed from realizing the prophetic ideals.

We must bear in mind that the deeds of a person must be judged by his environment. In a wicked and corrupt surrounding, people who possess a few good qualities, and thereby constitute a contrast with the others, may be accounted as righteous. It is reasonable to apply the idea of relativity also to morality. By the same token, a person being raised and living in moral surroundings but who does not conform to its standard even in minor matters should not be regarded as righteous. The remnant that escaped the general destruction were judged in comparison with their wicked surroundings. They could not share the fate of the others, as the judgment of destruction was pronounced only against those who had been totally corrupt. But on the other hand, they could not claim the fulfillment of the divine promises, as it was made to a remnant which were expected to conform to the highest prophetic ideals. Thus the prophetic prediction with regard to the advent of a Messiah who should reign over the righteous remnant was of a conditional nature like all prophetic predictions. Now the very fact that Isaiah expected the Messiah to be a scion of the house of David and not a descendant of any other family of Judah shows his exalted opinion of this dynasty, that it alone was destined to realize the highest expectations of the prophets, the establishment of the Golden Age of Israel.

Of special interest is Isaiah's protest against the high

position of Shebna who had been appointed steward of the royal house. This protest reads: "Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel: Go, get thee unto this steward, even unto Shebna, who is over the house: What hast thou here, and whom hast thou here, that thou hewed thee out here a sepulchre, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre on high, and gravest a habitation for thyself in the rock? Behold, the Lord will hurl thee up and down with a man's throw; yea, He will wind thee round and round; He will violently roll and toss thee like a ball into a large country; there shalt thou die, and there shall be the chariots of thy glory, thou shame of thy Lord's house. And I will thrust thee from thy post, and from thy station shalt thou be pulled down" (22.15-19). The very words of the prophet leave no room for doubt that Shebna was a foreigner. If we may judge from his name, which in all probability is a cuneiform *Shaphel*-formation of *banū* "to create," he was a Babylonian scholar who settled down in Judah as an astrologer and diviner, and became a favorite of king Hezekiah. We know the interest of this king in scholarly pursuits (Prov. 25.1). He conferred upon this Babylonian scholar the position of a royal scribe, and in this capacity he conducted the diplomatic correspondence between Judah and Assyria. Isaiah did not have any objection to this appointment. Though there may have been Judeans acquainted with the cuneiform writing, their knowledge was far beneath that of a native Babylonian, and it redounded to the honor of the Judean government that its correspondence to Assyria should be written in pure and classic cuneiform. But Hezekiah went still further in appointing this foreigner to the position of royal steward whose power seemed to have been paramount. He evidently received this appointment after the death of Hilkiah, in whose family this position was hereditary. Therefore Isaiah continued his divine message: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call My servant Eliakim

the son of Hilkiah; and I will clothe him with thy robe, and bind him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand; and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; and he shall open and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a peg in a sure place; and he shall be for a throne of honor to his father's house" (22.20-23). From this description it can be seen that the position of a royal steward was the highest in the state, and the power of its holder was nigh autocratic, and none could interfere with his measures.

If Shebna was a Babylonian, we may rest assured that he was a Babylonian patriot, and was ready to do everything to further the interests of his native land. It goes without saying that as a Babylonian he was the hereditary enemy of Assyria, from which his native land suffered so much for centuries, and he was ready to do anything in his power to overthrow it. It stands to reason that it was he who entered into negotiations with Merodach-baladan, the former king of Babylonia, who had been overthrown by Sargon (about 711). This king still aspired to the Babylonian throne and he was freely recognized by the Babylonians who looked upon Sargon as usurper. He possessed a principality at the Persian Gulf to which he retired after his defeat, and there he made preparations to re-conquer his former kingdom. It is likely that it was during this period that Shebna entered into negotiations with Merodach-baladan, and thereby he endangered the existence of Judah. Isaiah, who was bitterly opposed to foreign entanglements, saw the dangers of this policy and tried to prevent it. But there was a strong anti-Assyrian party which approved of Shebna's policy and saw in him the savior of the state from foreign vassalage. Therefore Isaiah could not attack him on account of his statesmanship which was destructive to the existence of Judah. There was no other

way but to rise as the champion of the hereditary right of the nobility, in declaring that the office of royal steward by right belonged to Eliakim the heir of Hilki'ah. The nobles, who jealously watched over their prerogatives, for their own sake, had to admit the justice of this claim, and Shebna was forced to resign his high position and return to his former position as royal scribe. And this position he indeed held at the time of Sennacherib's invasion (36.3; 37.2). However, Eliakim, while being appointed royal steward, was at the same time warned by Isaiah not to misuse his post in bestowing upon his own family all the high offices. This may have been formerly the case, when his father Hilki'ah had held this office, and therefore he was not in favor with the nobility, and they had no objection to a foreigner, as he was without a clan which he would raise to offices. Thus it was proper to warn Eliakim not to practice nepotism: "And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups even to all the vessels of flagons. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the peg that was fastened in a sure place give way; and it shall be hewn down, and fall, and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off; for the Lord hath spoken it" (22.24-25).

We may point out that Shebna's powerful position incidentally aggravated the condition of corruption and injustice among the nobility. The prophet Micah accused the ruling classes that they "abhor justice, and pervert all equity, building up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity" (3.9-10). From Jeremiah's trial, for having predicted for Jerusalem the fate of Shiloh, where some of the judges referred to Micah's prophetic activity in favor of Jeremiah (26.18-19), we know that this denunciation of Micah was uttered during the reign of Hezekiah. Now it goes without saying that it belongs to the period before Sennacherib's invasion, when Judah was still prosperous,

and thus to the earlier part of Hezekiah's reign. But Hezekiah is presented by the biblical historian as the most righteous king of Judah: "He trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel; so that after him there was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among them that were before him. For he cleaved to the Lord, he departed not from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses" (II Kings 18.5-6). Now is it conceivable that such horrid conditions of injustice and corruption, as Micah states, should have prevailed under an ideal king of that type? Of Josiah, Jeremiah said that he did justice and righteousness, and judged the cause of the poor and needy. Should not the same have been true of Hezekiah? But there is no difficulty, if we keep in mind the powerful position of the royal steward, who was practically the ruler of the country, as Isaiah said of Eliakim, that "he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah" (22.21). In his hand was also the administration of justice. Shebna, being a foreigner and careful not to excite the envy of the ruling classes, did not dare to interfere with their conduct, and closed his eyes to the wrongs which they committed. Thus the oppressed classes cried in vain for justice. The nobility were quite pleased to have such a royal steward under whose rule they could do whatever they pleased. This was not the fault of Shebna, who neither practiced nor approved of corruption and injustices, as Isaiah did not charge him with these crimes. It was exclusively due to his foreign birth, and as such he would have lost his position and probably also his life, if he had dared to stem the rule of oppression. Isaiah's opposition to the rule of a foreigner as royal steward, and Micah's denunciation of the reign of injustice and oppression, opened the eyes of Hezekiah to the real conditions of the country, and, investigating and finding their cause, he speedily removed Shebna from his position and appointed Eliakim in his place, under whose

rule the conditions greatly improved, as far as possible under an aristocratic system of government. That Eliakim was a man of an ideal type after the heart of the prophet is seen from the fact that in Isaiah's divine message he is called "My servant." To this change of office we may refer the words found in the Book of Jeremiah that Hezekiah feared the Lord and entreated His favor, and the Lord repented Him of the evil which He had pronounced against them (26.19).

We see then Isaiah's interest in the offices of the court and in the prerogatives of the ruling classes. He was not a champion of democracy. If there should have arisen a conflict between the people at large and the royal dynasty, Isaiah would have certainly sided with the latter, and we shall see that it actually did happen. Also on this point we may draw a parallel between the Judean Isaiah and the Athenian Solon. The latter in his constitution of the Athenian state did not deprive the nobility of their rank but merely curbed their predominance, so that it should not lead to abuses. This was actually the position of Isaiah with regard to the nobility of Judah. However, his efforts consisting of moral persuasion were in vain. The leading classes, differing from those of Athens, were deaf, blind, and their hearts devoid of understanding.

It may seem a paradox, yet it is literally true and may even be regarded as a truism, if we point out that there are two social systems by which equality can be achieved and which level all the ranks of the people: Democracy and Autocracy. The latter form of government is just as effective as the former, if not more so, to establish justice and righteousness in the land, to protect the poor against oppression of the rich, and to give all the citizens equal opportunities to improve their fortunes and to rise to positions of honors and riches. If a ruler under exceptional circumstances is able to rise to such an exalted position of having unlimited powers, and, at the same time, is deeply

imbued with the sense of justice toward all his subjects, without exception, from the highest to the lowest, and being strong minded enough to make it effective in all the affairs of the state, he can establish a kingdom conforming to the highest ideals. Being a law unto himself and not responsible for his acts but to his own conscience of righteousness, he can deprive the nobility of the estates they wrongly acquired and restore them to their original owners. He can even divide the property of the land equally among all subjects, and can also free all those who have lost their liberty on account of debt and poverty.

However, it is exceedingly dangerous to entrust a single person with this formidable power, and such a ruler is far from being desirable under ordinary circumstances. But exceptional cases of disease require exceptional remedies. When a state verges on the brink of ruin, due to the rule of the aristocracy, and democracy is not to be had, the only remedy for preventing its downfall is autocracy. Even a state based on democracy, in times of exigence and distress, is forced to invest an official with absolute authority and to bestow upon him unlimited power, though only for a certain period. However, where the distress is of long standing and has become a chronic disease, the powers of the autocratic ruler must not be limited by time. The termination of his powers depends upon the complete eradication of the disease, so that no relapse is to be feared.

Isaiah had abandoned all hope of converting the nobility to his own views and knew perfectly well that nothing could move them to correct their ways. But his belief in the divine destiny of the house of David was so firm that he expected that the Lord would raise a king of this dynasty, endowed with a deep sense of righteousness and possessing firmness of mind, who would be strong enough to make himself independent of the nobility, and siding with the common people, they would willingly grant him absolute authority, and by the virtue of this authority he

would establish a state in conformity with the prophetic ideals. It is very likely that this prophet saw in the young boy Hezekiah such exceptional qualities of piety, a deep sense of justice, and strength of character, to be firmly convinced that he was the future ruler destined to raise the state from the depth of corruption and to establish ideal conditions of social justice and morality. He announced to the people that salvation was within sight: "For a child is born unto us, a son is given unto us; and the government is upon his shoulder; and his name is called: Wonder of a Counsellor, God is Mighty, The Father is Everlasting, The Prince of Peace; that the government may be increased, and of peace there be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it, through justice and through righteousness, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts doth perform this" (Isa. 9.5-6).

Isaiah not only saw in Hezekiah the future ideal ruler, but was also instrumental in making him fit for such a position. There can scarcely be any doubt that the prophet was his tutor. Now it would seem highly improbable that Ahaz should have entrusted his son and successor to the prophet to imbue him with his own religious and moral principles. But in dealing with the chronology of the Judean kings in the 8th century, we have shown that Hezekiah was a young boy about the age of eight years when he succeeded to the throne in the year 727. In support of this date we have briefly referred to the date of Isaiah's oracle against the Philistines. Considering that this date is rejected by a good many modern critics, a discussion of this oracle against the Philistines would not be superfluous. It reads: "Rejoice not, O Philistia, because the rod that smote thee is broken; for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a basilisk, and his fruit shall be a flying serpent." This oracle is headed by the chronological note: "In the year that king Ahaz died was this oracle" (14.28-

32). The question is now: At whose death did Philistia rejoice? And who is meant by the rod that smote it? Surely this cannot mean that Ahaz had smitten them and now had died. If Ahaz did smite the Philistines, history knows nothing about it. On the contrary, II Chronicles states that the Philistines smote him, evidently as allies of Aram and Israel (28.18). If so, the death-year of Ahaz is merely a date, and has no connection with the contents of this oracle. It can refer only to an Assyrian king from whom the Philistines suffered greatly, and they rejoiced at his death. But the prophet told them that his successor would inflict upon them a greater punishment. Now there are three Assyrian kings that come into consideration: Tiglathpileser IV, who died 727; his son Shalmaneser V, who died 722; and Sargon, who died 705. But the second must be eliminated, as he never had come into collision with the Philistines. With regard to the third, he indeed treated the Philistines mercilessly, and we might thus say that the oracle referred to this king. If so, we would have to assign to Ahaz a reign of 30 years (735-705), and thereby we would have to disregard all biblical dates with regard to the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah (II Kings 16.2; 18.1-2, 9-10, 13). But then how could this oracle declare that the successor of Sargon would be a basilisk or a flying serpent, and would treat them more severely than his predecessor? On the contrary, Sennacherib made the Philistines stronger than before in dividing the cities of Judah among the Philistine kings of Ashdod, Ekron and Gaza. Therefore it is obvious that the oracle referred to the death of Tiglathpileser in the year 727, in which year Ahaz also died, and the basilisk and flying serpent is of course Sargon, who severely punished the Philistines who had joined the Syro-Ephraimitic alliance against Assyria. The date 727 as the year of Hezekiah's succession is confirmed by three dates in the biblical records. It is first stated that Hezekiah ascended the throne in the third year of Hoshea (II Kings

18.1). It is declared again that the fourth year of Hezekiah's reign was the seventh year of Hoshea (ibid. 18.9); and it is finally repeated that the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign corresponded to the ninth year of Hoshea, when Samaria fell in the year 722. There is only one date that is irreconcilable with these dates, and this is the statement that Sennacherib came against Judah in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, which occurred in the year 701. But here we have evidently an error of the copyist who wrote 14 instead of 24, and this does not refer to Sennacherib's invasion of Judah but to Hezekiah's rebellion. It is natural that Hezekiah should have rebelled soon after the death of Sargon. He thought or was persuaded that Sennacherib did not possess his father's warlike prowess, and he would be able to free the Western countries from the yoke of Assyria by forming a confederacy against it.

However, it is possible that the assumption that the date of Sennacherib's invasion occurred in the 14th year of Hezekiah's reign is neither based on tradition nor was an error of the copyist, and does not belong to the original compiler of the biblical records at all, but to a later scribe. It was due to a deduction from two facts: Hezekiah's reign of 29 years; and that he lived 15 years, after the recovery from his illness, which happened during Sennacherib's invasion. Both these facts would leave no room for doubt that Sennacherib's invasion must have occurred in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign. But as a matter of fact, both of these statements are incorrect. Sennacherib's invasion did not coincide with Hezekiah's illness. Mero-dach-baladan's embassy to Hezekiah to congratulate him on his recovery must have been sent before he was defeated by Sennacherib in the year 704. This embassy no doubt played a most important part in the events of the period, as we shall see later. Thus there was an interval of three years between Hezekiah's illness and Sennacherib's invasion. With regard to the duration of Hezekiah's reign,

the number 29 is likewise incorrect. This would be the case, even if we should add to this number the fifteen years which the Lord had added to the duration of his life, which would bring it up to 44 years. He reigned several years longer than that. Internal evidence from the narrative of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah proves beyond doubt that this king invaded Judah twice: in 701, and about twenty years later. The second campaign terminated in the destruction of his army and his ignominious flight to his capital. During the second invasion Hezekiah must have been still alive. Even if Hezekiah had reigned 50 years, he would not have reached old age, as he would have died at the age of 58 years. Isaiah of course would have been at the time of the second invasion a very old man. But is there any reason at all why this prophet should not have reached an age of a hundred years or more?

Hezekiah was born at the time of the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion of Judah. It stands to reason that if Isaiah gave Ahaz a sign that the young woman who was pregnant should bear a son, who should be called Immanuel and that the land of Judah would be free from its enemies, before the child was weaned (7.14-17), he naturally referred to the wife of Ahaz. The prophet could not have meant his own wife or some other woman. Ahaz would not have been interested in the family affairs of the prophet or of other people. Moreover, the prophet refers to Judah as "the land of Immanuel" (8.8). Thus Immanuel was the successor of Ahaz and is of course identical with Hezekiah. Isaiah calls Judah the land of Immanuel, because there he predicted the invasion of Judah by Assyria, and this happened during the reign of Immanuel. The idolatrous Ahaz who did not care for the prophet's message did not call his son by the name of Immanuel. Accordingly Hezekiah was born in 735 and succeeded his father in 727, and thus was at the age of eight years at the time of his succession to the throne.

Now we have said that during his infancy, Hezekiah was more under the influence of the priesthood than of Isaiah. But as a scion of the nobility, the prophet probably was one of the counsellors of state, and in this capacity, it was not difficult for him to gain access to the young king, and we may well assume that he became his tutor during the early years of adolescence. As his tutor he looked full of hope for better times to come, convinced that his pupil would become the long expected ideal king, who would realize all his expectations. We may rest assured that he showed Hezekiah all the defects of the social system of aristocracy, and advised him of the best means of removing them. Seeing that the king had no force at his disposal outside of the nobility to enforce his authority, and could do nothing against them in carrying out his intentions, who knows whether Isaiah did not recommend to him to engage Arabic nomads as mercenaries? Considering that the nobility was too effeminate to ward off aggressions of the neighboring peoples who often made incursions into Judah, the nobility would have had no objections to such a measure and no suspicion that this force might be used also against themselves, that by its means the king could enforce justice and curb oppression of the lower classes. Hezekiah must have possessed a considerable military force, if he was in a position to pursue an aggressive policy, as it is stated: "He smote the Philistines unto Gaza and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fortified city" (II Kings 18.8). From Sennacherib's inscriptions it can be seen that Hezekiah was recognized as a leader among the Western states in the confederacy against Assyria. This leadership must have been due to his military power. This surely did not consist of the effeminate nobility, though some of them may have been able and willing to enroll themselves in his army. Sennacherib's reference to Hezekiah's Arabic mercenaries leaves no room for doubt that his power rested chiefly upon them.

However, Isaiah's expectations that this king would establish justice and righteousness in the land remained unfulfilled. Judging by the style of the prayers ascribed to him (Isa. 37.15-20; 38.9-20), he appears to us as a man of prophetic rank. His prayer, "Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a whole heart, and have done that which was good in Thy sight" (38.3), shows that he did not feel himself guilty toward God or men. That he did abolish the local sanctuaries, we know not only from the biblical statement (II Kings 18.4), but also from the address of the Assyrian commander-in-chief Rab-shakeh, in which he said: "But if ye say unto me: We trust in the Lord our God; is not that He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah had taken away, and had said to Judah and Jerusalem: Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?" (ibid. 18.22). From Proverbs 25.1, we know that there was considerable literary activity during his reign, and that he employed scholars for the purpose of copying old manuscripts. We have already referred to Shebna whom he evidently admired for his scholarly achievements and raised to a high position, because he was a scholar himself, as a pupil of Isaiah. We have referred to Micah's denunciations of the leading classes of Judah during his reign, which show that under his reign the social conditions were far from being ideal. The fact that Micah had no word of blame for the king may be taken as evidence that he did not hold him responsible for the corruption and injustice prevailing in the land.

Conditions of that kind require radical remedies. An autocrat deeply imbued with a sense of justice must not hesitate to use means of a harsh nature, even against the most intimate friends and relations, for the sake of establishing right and justice among the people. He must harden his heart against all feelings of pity and sympathy where such an aim is concerned. He must be like a surgeon able to operate on the body politic and not grow faint at

the sight of blood. Now the Book of Kings says of both kings, Hezekiah and Josiah, that there were no kings like them before and afterwards (II Kings 18.5; 23.25), and these statements seem to be contradictory. But each of these religious kings was in a class by himself. Josiah carried out his reformation with sword and fire, exhibiting a zeal for the restoration of the pure Jahveh-worship, which disregarded all human feelings in achieving his aim. In this respect he was unlike any king before him and after him. He wanted to atone for the sins of Manasseh who in the destruction of the Jahveh-religion had filled Jerusalem with the shedding of innocent blood from one end to another (ibid. 21.16; 24.4). Hezekiah, however, was of a different type. We do not find that he had used any violent measures in abolishing the high places. They were merely closed by an order of the government. He of course broke down the pillars and cut off the Asherah which were of an idolatrous character (ibid. 18.4).

Hezekiah possessed all the qualities of a righteous ruler except a stern and stout heart to enforce the laws of Israel's religion. He was wholly devoted to the God of Israel, as he said of himself in his prayer, and his heart was pure but he was physically weak. He was willing to comply with all the divine commandments, but he shrank back from using harsh measures. He was a scholar, as we said, and scholars as a rule are not fanatics. Neither Isaiah nor Micah blamed him for his natural weakness. But Isaiah must have been sorely disappointed in seeing that his expectations of this king were far from being fulfilled. Nevertheless his disappointment did not make him lose his firm faith in the destiny of the house of David to present Israel with an ideal king possessing all qualifications for carrying out all postulates for the establishment of a state in which justice and righteousness would reign supreme. He looked forward to a remnant which would re-establish the state on the principles of justice and equality, and there would be

no need for enforcing the laws, and this state would be governed by a scion of the house of David. Hezekiah on account of his tender heart had been unable to use means of violence against the oppressors of the people. But these men were after all the overwhelming majority of the ruling classes, and the righteous among them constituted an insignificant minority. However, in the state established by the remnant it would be the other way. The aim of its righteous ruler will be to watch over the principles of justice and preserve the government from deterioration. He will not enforce the laws by physical penalties but by moral suasion. "He will smite the ruthless with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked" (11.4). This does not mean actual slaying of the wicked, as it would not be an ideal conception and be out of harmony with the description of this ideal king. But if the ruthless and wicked listen to moral suasion and turn over a new leaf, they are practically dead spiritually, in no longer being ruthless and wicked.

The same hope regarding a righteous ruler was also shared by the prophet Micah, the younger contemporary of Isaiah. This prophet expressed himself even more clearly than Isaiah that the righteous ruler will reign *over the remnant*: "But thou, Beth-lehem Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from ancient days. Therefore will He give them up, until the time that she who travaileth hath brought forth; then *the residue of his brethren shall return* with the children of Israel. And he shall stand, and shall feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, etc." (5.1-3). The date of this prophecy is the period after Sennacherib's first invasion of Judah, when its condition was almost hopeless, as a large part of the Judeans had been carried off into captivity, and their territory divided among the Philistine states. This was a message of comfort that

the Judean captives will return along with the captives of Northern Israel, and their ruler will be of the seed of David who came from Beth-lehem. This prophecy is almost identical with that of Hosea: "And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint themselves one head, and shall go up out of the land (of their captivity)" (2.2). This "head" is of course a king of the house of David, as seen from this prophet's words: "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God and David their king" (3.5). The views of the modern critics, that all these Messianic predictions belong to exilic or post-exilic periods, may be safely ignored, as they have no leg to stand upon, and are based upon preconceived points of view. The hopes of the prophets Isaiah and Micah were strengthened by seeing the throne of Judah occupied by a righteous king who was lacking only in not possessing a stout heart for carrying out all prophetic demands and thus becoming the long expected ideal ruler of Israel.

Certainly Hezekiah was not in every respect obedient to Isaiah's advice. His alliance with Egypt was bitterly denounced by this prophet (31.1-3). However, this was evidently due to circumstances over which he had no control. The general conception that Hezekiah asked the help of Egypt against Assyria is incorrect. On the contrary, there is good reason for the assumption that Egypt unceasingly urged Hezekiah to renounce his allegiance to Assyria. Judah was not a very fertile country, and the people there were far from being wealthy. The nobles were free from all taxation, as can be seen from their designation *Hōrim* "the Free." The taxes collected from the people at large did not suffice for keeping up a large army consisting chiefly of mercenaries. But we have seen that Hezekiah must have had a large military force at his disposal. We may rest assured that he received large subsidies from Egypt for this purpose.

In considering the political conditions in the 8th and 7th centuries, we can easily see that the chief aim of Assyria was the conquest of Egypt. This aim could not be realized as long as the Western countries remained unconquered, as in case of a mishap the Assyrian armies would have been caught between two fires, as it were, and their retreat into their own country would have been cut off. But as soon as the Western countries had been completely subdued, and there was no longer any fear of an uprising, and this actually happened under the reign of Esar-haddon, this king invaded Egypt, and in a few campaigns conquered a large part of it, on which occasion Memphis was destroyed. Esar-haddon died soon after, and in the meantime Egypt was re-conquered by its former king Tirhakah. But as soon as Ashurbanipal succeeded to the throne, he invaded Egypt again, and this time it was completely conquered. However, this conquest was not permanent, and after a few years Egypt became free again. Now the ambitions of the Assyrians to make themselves masters of Egypt were not unknown to the Egyptian kings. Therefore it was for Egypt a matter of self-preservation to keep the Assyrians away from the West.

Furthermore, Egypt could never forget the former days of the 18th and 19th Dynasties, when Syria and Palestine had been under its rule. A nation never abandons its aspirations, though the prospect of realizing them may seem nigh impossible. The Egyptian kings claimed those dominions by right of inheritance. It was due to this claim that Shishak, the founder of the 22nd Dynasty, invaded Judah and evidently also Northern Israel. Thus it is natural that the fomenting of troubles for Assyria in the Western states should have been the policy of the Egyptian kings. Egypt was safe from an Assyrian invasion as long as Palestine and the other Syrian states were in a condition of ferment and not completely subdued by Assyria. Egypt would have gladly seen Assyria completely defeated and

kept away from the West, as in this case Egypt might have had a chance to get this region into its own possession. This actually happened under Pharaoh Necho, after the battle of Megiddo (II Kings 24.7). But Egypt was also pleased to see that Assyria did not succeed in establishing itself so firmly in the West as to prevent all uprisings against its rule. So long as this was the case, Egypt was comparatively safe from an Assyrian invasion.

If so, it stands to reason that Egypt should have bribed the leading classes in the Western states to use their influence with king and people to rise against Assyria. This was of course a patriotic duty to make their native land independent of Assyria, and nobody could accuse them of treason for counselling such a step. On the contrary, the pro-Assyrian partisans were looked upon as traitors. No man likes to be denounced as traitor, and we may be sure that the overwhelming majority of the leading classes were pro-Egyptian. Those who disapproved of an uprising against Assyria kept quiet. It required the courage of an Isaiah to condemn such a step. Egypt being a rich country, it could well afford to pay subsidies to princes of Western states to enable them to establish large military forces which could be used against Assyria. We may reasonably assume that it was due to Egyptian subsidies that Hezekiah was in a position to hire a large army of Arabic mercenaries, as we already observed. If Hezekiah had rejected the demand of Egypt to rise against Assyria, Egypt would have discontinued the payment of the subsidies. Consequently Hezekiah would have been forced to dismiss the largest part of his army, and thereby would have lost his leading position among the Western states. Judah itself might have been exposed to incursions of hostile neighbors and would have had no means of protecting itself. Assyria would not have protected Judah, as it was to Assyria's advantage if the Western peoples were at odds, as long as they were loyal and paid their annual tributes promptly.

Hezekiah was quite aware of the fact that his army even in co-operation with those of the allies would be unable to cope with the Assyrian power, if not backed by an Egyptian army. For this purpose he sent an embassy to Egypt to be assured of the assistance of that country. Now we have taken it for granted that the leading classes of the Western states were in the pay of Egypt. We may say the same of those of Judah. Corrupt men are not immune to bribery, even in matters of the highest importance, where the services demanded of them would jeopardize the safety of their country. Egypt bribed not a few of the leading men of Judah to urge Hezekiah to ally himself with them against Assyria, and this they could easily do under the guise of patriotism. Moreover, we must bear in mind that it was inconceivable that such a righteous king as Hezekiah should have been in favor with the corrupt nobility of Judah. Having a military force at his disposal, Hezekiah of course was feared by them, and they did not show any open act of disloyalty. But they would not have shed any tears, if by some misfortune he had lost his throne or life, and his place had been taken by another member of the house of David of their own type. It happened not seldom that an Assyrian vassal who was disloyal was deposed and his throne was given to another member of that dynasty. Nebuchadnezzar did the same in deposing Jehoiachin and enthroning his uncle Zedekiah, and Pharaoh Necho did the same in deposing Jehoahaz and giving the throne to Jehoiakim. The same might have happened also to Hezekiah, if defeated by Assyria.

Isaiah, however, was absolutely opposed to any alliance with Egypt. He was well informed about the internal conditions of that country. The Ethiopian 25th Dynasty united Egypt and Ethiopia under its rule. But the Egyptians submitted to its rule as to that of a foreign power. The rulers of this Dynasty needed all their military forces to keep Egypt in subjection. It took many years to estab-

lish its rule. This Dynasty was not in a position to enter upon a career of conquest and to measure its power with Assyria. Being in a precarious condition, this Dynasty had good reason to fear Assyria. If the latter had invaded Egypt during this period, it is questionable whether the native Egyptians would not have submitted at once to the invaders out of hatred to the Ethiopians. The only way of preventing it was to instigate the Western states to rebel and to keep Sargon busy in subduing them. This Dynasty saved its own skin, as it were, by sacrificing the misguided Western states to Assyrian vengeance. Isaiah as a statesman towering above his age was not blinded to this fact and knew the policy of the Ethiopian Dynasty. As a matter of fact, in the biblical narrative of Sennacherib's invasion, Tirhakah is not styled "king of Egypt" but "king of Ethiopia," as he was still looked upon as usurper of the throne of Egypt.

During Sargon's reign Hezekiah neither possessed a considerable military force, nor did he receive subsidies from Egypt. Sargon would have regarded each of these acts as treason toward Assyria. Yet it seems that about 714-711 Hezekiah was inclined to ally himself with Egypt, and to join a confederacy against Assyria. But Isaiah's advice against such a step prevailed. Judah on account of its treasonable intentions was in danger of an Assyrian invasion. The prophet expected it, and mourned by walking naked and barefoot for the space of three years. When the danger was over, Isaiah delivered this message of the Lord against Egypt: "Like as My servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years, as a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia, so shall the king of Assyria lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Ethiopia, young and old, naked and barefoot, and with buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt. And they shall be dismayed and ashamed, because of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory. And the inhabitants of

this coast-land shall say in that day: Behold, such is our expectation, whither we fled for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria; and how shall we escape?" (20.3-6). This message is dated: "In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him and he fought against Ashdod and he took it." This prophetic message was fulfilled many years later when Esar-haddon and Ashurbanipal had conquered Egypt.

Hezekiah knew that on this occasion he had endangered the existence of the state and remained loyal to Assyria for the next six years. But the death of Sargon in the battle against the Cimmerians raised the hope of some Western states of freeing themselves from the yoke of the Assyrians. His successor Sennacherib was still an unknown quantity, and there was the possibility that he might not be the equal of his father in military prowess. Egypt began again its diplomatic intrigues with Hezekiah, and by giving him large subsidies enabled him to take into his service a large force of Arabian mercenaries. It was at that time that he was able to recover from the Philistines the territory they had taken from his father Ahaz during the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion (II Kings 18.8; II Chron. 28.18). He could not have waged this war against the Philistines in the early part of his reign under Shalmaneser V, seeing that at the death of this king he was only 13 years old. Nor is it likely that it occurred under Sargon, as this king would have interfered, if Hezekiah had deprived Philistines of their territory. Thus it evidently happened after the death of Sargon, when Hezekiah intended to renounce his allegiance to Assyria. We may notice, by the way, that we understand much better his political acts, which show a certain lack of maturity, as soon as we know that he was a child of 8 years at his succession, 21 years old when he intended to rebel against Assyria in the year 714, and 32 years old when he rebelled against Sennacherib in 704, and thus had not yet reached *the Age of Under-*

standing, which according to the Rabbis comes with the fortieth year. Young men, as a rule, are daring and optimistic, and this also holds true of Hezekiah.

We have already referred to Shebna, who probably was the royal steward about this period, noting that he played a very important part in the political events of these times. We have seen that after Sargon's death, Merodach-baladan again ascended the throne of Babylonia which he held about one year until he was defeated by Sennacherib. It was during this year (705-704) that he sent an embassy to Hezekiah to congratulate him on recovery from his illness. Considering that both had the same interests and the same aims to free themselves from the yoke of Assyria, it would have been stupidity of the first magnitude on their part not to ally themselves against the common enemy. Merodach-baladan, who once had defeated the great warrior Sargon and was able to hold the throne of Babylonia for 11 years, felt certain that he would be able to overcome Sargon's inferior successor Sennacherib. This certainty was shared by Hezekiah who did not know much about the real conditions of the East and the real reason of Merodach-baladan's defeat of Sargon, which was due chiefly to his alliance with the Elamites and the Aramean nomads. Merodach-baladan intended indeed to renew this alliance and thereby become powerful as before. Sennacherib, however, did not give him a chance to consolidate his power. Sennacherib was a fast worker in his campaigns. Being without support from his allies, Merodach-baladan was totally defeated by Sennacherib. While the ambassadors of Merodach-baladan demonstrated to Hezekiah the power of their king and what a desirable ally he would be, Hezekiah showed them his treasures, and that he was rich enough to keep up a large army. We may rest assured that Shebna being Babylonian or Chaldean, and thus racially closely connected with the Chaldean Merodach-baladan, was strongly in favor of an alliance with the

Babylonian king. They may or may not have concluded a formal alliance. The promise of Hezekiah to form a Western alliance against Assyria was quite satisfactory to Merodach-baladan's ambassadors. Assyria would thus be attacked in the East and in the West at the same time. Merodach-baladan hoped that Sennacherib would first try to subdue the West, and this would give Merodach-baladan an opportunity to consolidate his power and build up a formidable army; while Hezekiah hoped that Sennacherib would be busy in the East, and this would give Hezekiah a chance to ally all the Western states against Assyria. This was indeed the case. Hezekiah rebelled in 704 and Sennacherib's invasion occurred about three years later in 701.

But to have a better understanding of this event we must read the story of this embassy in full: "At that time Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent a letter and a present to Hezekiah; for he heard that he had been sick, and was recovered. And Hezekiah was glad of them, and showed them his treasure-house, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious oil, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures; there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not. Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him: What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said: They are come from a far country unto me, even from Babylon. Then said he: What have they seen in thy house? And Hezekiah answered: All that is in my house have they seen; there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shown them. Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah: Hear the word of the Lord of hosts: Behold, the days come, that all that is in thy house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left, saith the Lord" (Isa. 39.1-6). We notice that the prophet asked: "What said these men?" and Hezekiah did not answer this ques-

tion. It is obvious that no answer was necessary, as Isaiah fully understood the situation, knowing what they said as if he had been present at the audience, and that they expressly came for the purpose of inciting Hezekiah to rebel against Assyria. Isaiah was of course opposed to it. Nevertheless if Hezekiah did rebel against his advice, it was the most sane step to enter into an alliance with the Babylonian king, though we need not doubt that Isaiah well knew the weakness of this king. However, Hezekiah showed a lack of foresight in exhibiting to these foreigners all the resources of his kingdom. This could not remain a secret and Assyria was bound to hear of it, and consequently would demand a larger tribute from Judah. It would have been good policy on the part of Hezekiah to claim that his country was poverty-stricken and not to boast of his riches, and Assyria would have been satisfied with the present tribute. This very fact showed without any doubt that the Babylonian ambassadors succeeded in persuading Hezekiah to rebel against Assyria, and that this rebellion was an accomplished fact, so that Hezekiah did not care whether Assyria knew of the resources of his country or not.

However, the real danger of Hezekiah's boast was in another direction which the prophet clearly saw and Hezekiah did not. We have observed that a nation never abandons its claim to dominions over which it formerly ruled, and we have seen that the Egyptian kings claimed the Syrian provinces by right of inheritance, and both Shishak and Pharaoh Necho realized these claims. Now Babylonia had a twofold claim to these dominions, one that dated from the Hammurabi-period and another as heir of Assyria. This claim was indeed made good by Nebuchadnezzar at the downfall of Assyria, as soon as he ascended the Babylonian throne in 605. He utterly defeated Pharaoh Necho in the battle of Charchemish and deprived him of his Syrian provinces, "from the Brook of Egypt unto the River Euphrates, all that pertained to the

king of Egypt" (II Kings 24.7). Considering that Nabopolassar, the father and predecessor of Nebuchadnezzar, was a Chaldean like Merodach-baladan, he may have claimed the throne of Babylonia by right of inheritance, and who knows whether he was not a descendant of the latter? Now if Merodach-baladan had been victorious and would have overthrown Assyria with the help of his Elamitic and Aramean allies, as it happened about a hundred years later, the first thing that he would have done would have been to claim all the Assyrian dominions, and Hezekiah would have become his vassal. Knowing the rich resources of his country, Merodach-baladan would have asked of Hezekiah an immense tribute in order to weaken him and thereby keep him in subjection. This is what Isaiah meant in prophesying that his treasures shall be carried off to Babylonia, and nothing shall be left. If Hezekiah was certain that Merodach-baladan would be victorious in overthrowing Assyria, he could be certain that such a fate was in store for him. In this prophecy we may see sound historical sense. But this divine message carried at the same time comfort and encouragement for the present, as it plainly stated that Sennacherib would be unable to conquer Judah and overthrow the house of David. Therefore Hezekiah answered: "Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken." Isaiah seemed to have been surprised at this answer. Hezekiah therefore expressed himself more clearly: "Is it not so, if peace and truth shall be in mine own days?"

Just as Hezekiah did not ask the prophet's advice on entering into negotiations with Merodach-baladan's ambassadors, so did he not seek the counsel of the prophet in informing him of his intentions, when, persuaded by his counsellors, he sent an embassy to Egypt for the purpose of concluding an alliance with that country. The prophet expressed himself very bitterly concerning it: "Woe to the rebellious children that take counsel, but not of Me; and that form projects, but not of My spirit, that they may

add sin to sin; that walk to go down to Egypt, and have not asked at My mouth; to take refuge in the stronghold of Pharaoh, and to take shelter in the shadow of Egypt. Therefore shall the stronghold of Pharaoh turn to your shame, and the shelter in the shadow of Egypt to your confusion. For his princes are at Zoan and his ambassadors are come to Hanes. They shall be ashamed of a people that cannot profit them, that are not a help nor profit, but a shame and also a reproach" (30.1-5). The prophet did not say too much. We may assume that those of the Western states who had been tricked by Egypt on former occasions, though they had been inclined to follow the lead of Hezekiah and to enter the Western confederacy headed by him, broke off the negotiations, as soon as they learned that his chief reliance was upon Egypt, and they ridiculed his policy. Thus the alliance with Egypt was for Judah a shame and reproach, and they discredited themselves in the eyes of the Western peoples. Therefore it is no surprise that most of them submitted at once to Sennacherib as soon as he appeared in the West.

While this denunciation was of a purely political nature, there is another prophetic utterance in which this alliance is treated from a religious point of view: "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help, and rely on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many, and in horsemen, because they are exceeding mighty; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord! Yet He also is wise, and bringeth evil, and doth not call back His words; but will arise against the house of the evil-doers, and against the help of them that work iniquity. Now the Egyptians are men, and not God, and their horses flesh, and not spirit; so when the Lord shall stretch out His hands, both he that helpeth shall stumble, and he that is helped shall fall, and they all shall perish together" (31.1-3). It seems that the ambassadors returning from Egypt brought glowing reports of the mighty power of

Egypt and of its great preparations for the war with Assyria, and the prophet was ridiculed for his opposition, in the name of the Lord, to an alliance with Egypt, and a good many of the Judeans lost their belief in the Lord, and this unbelief led to corruption and iniquity. It is noteworthy that in both prophetic denunciations, Isaiah did not blame the king, as he knew that the leading classes misled him into this step. This political blunder brought the state of Judah to the brink of ruin. Now one of Hezekiah's chief characteristics was that: "He trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel" (II Kings 18.5). His exceptional piety, his trust upon the Lord, that He would help him against Assyria, may indeed have been a powerful incentive for him to rise against it. This seems to have been the view of the biblical historian (*ibid.* 18.7). But this was a wrong religious conception to believe that the Lord would save Judah for the sake of a righteous king. When Isaiah delivered unto him the divine message, that Jerusalem will not fall into the hands of Sennacherib, he did not tell him that this will be done for Hezekiah's sake, but said in the Lord's name: "I will defend this city to save it for Mine own sake, and for My servant David's sake" (*ibid.* 19.34).

Hezekiah must have known that the leading classes of Judah, though curbed by his own sense of justice and righteousness were utterly corrupt, due to the system of inequality upon which this state was based. The king was powerless to mend this condition. He no doubt established courts of justice where the cause of the poor and needy was judged in accordance with the Mosaic laws. But this was of little help for them. Who would have dared to testify in their behalf against the wealthy classes? If there were no witnesses, the judges had to dismiss their suits in accordance with the law, and they lost their cause. If Hezekiah did not know of these conditions, is it conceivable that Isaiah should not have informed him of these facts? Hezekiah nevertheless held this erroneous religious

conception. He deceived himself into the belief that he was an *autocrat*, and thus constituted *the State*, and therefore believed that moral and religious conditions had to be judged by his own conduct. But if Hezekiah had been a real autocrat, he would have reformed the state by abolishing the system of inequality and depriving the nobles of their power, as Isaiah expected of him. But due to Hezekiah's weakness of character he could not carry out such an overthrow of all existing conditions. It was thus proper that Divine Justice should judge the state in accordance with the deeds of the governing classes and disregard the conduct of the king who personally could not have been charged with any unrighteous deed.

However, this erroneous conception that the state is judged by the conduct of the king was unfortunately held not only by Hezekiah but also by the people at large. After the retreat of Sennacherib, Judah was in the most deplorable condition. The largest part of the Judean state was handed over to the neighboring states of the Philistines, Gaza, Ashdod, and Ekron. Sennacherib in his inscription states that he brought out of Judah 20,050 inhabitants. But we may seriously question whether all of them had been carried into captivity, as the transportation of such a large number of captives to Assyria was exceedingly difficult. It stands to reason that only the leading members were carried into captivity, while the common people were permitted to remain as subjects of the Philistine states. The Judean territory was now rather limited. The royal treasures were completely depleted after Sennacherib was paid an immense tribute. Hezekiah had of course to dismiss his foreign mercenaries, as he was unable to pay them for their services. The people naturally asked: How can we believe in the power and justice of the Lord, if He treated Hezekiah in that way as a reward for his faithfulness and righteousness? True, Jerusalem had been saved from the hands of the Assyrians. But people who lose their wealth and save

a small part of it are rarely grateful to Providence for not having lost everything, but deplore their losses and lose their belief in Providence. Moreover, the people considered it as a matter of fact that the Lord should have protected His own residence and His sanctuary, but thought that the Lord was not interested in the people outside of His own city or might have been powerless to save them against Assyrian gods that were stronger than Jahveh. We have seen from Micah that the people were firmly convinced that the Lord would protect Jerusalem for His own sake (Micah 3.11).

This erroneous conception that the Lord judges a people by the conduct of its king aggravated the moral and religious conditions of the people. Hezekiah himself may have been taunted by his courtiers for his deep devotion to the Lord and His commandments. Who knows whether in his depth of despair Hezekiah may not have become somewhat indifferent to the affairs of the government, and that the leading classes had a free hand to commit any act of injustice and oppression. Men of his type are as a rule not of a robust constitution, and we can readily believe that in such a state of mind, brooding over his misfortunes, Hezekiah became dangerously ill, but recovered and lived fifteen years longer, according to the biblical statement, and this might have happened several years after Sennacherib's first invasion. Hezekiah had been sick before about 704, when the embassy of Merodach-baladan had come to congratulate him on his recovery. But just as in the present biblical records the two invasions of Sennacherib are treated as one, the same may be exactly true of Hezekiah's sicknesses which were separated by an interval of about ten years. There is indeed a biblical record which indicates that his religious conduct after his recovery was not blameless. It reads: "In those days Hezekiah was sick even unto death; and he prayed unto the Lord; and He spoke unto him, and gave him a sign. But Hezekiah rendered not according to the

benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up; therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. But Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah" (II Chron. 32.24-26). This biblical record states plainly that this happened a considerable time after Sennacherib's invasion.

Now according to the biblical records, Hezekiah's tribute to Sennacherib was given before Jerusalem was besieged by Rab-shakeh and the Assyrian army, and this biblical conception is generally accepted. But if this should have been the case, how is it that Sennacherib in his inscriptions is silent about it? On the contrary, he distinctly stated: "With thirty talents of gold, eight hundred talents of silver, precious stones . . . he despatched after me to Nineveh my capital city; He sent his ambassador to give tribute and make submission." From this record it is evident that Sennacherib had already retreated to Assyria, and Hezekiah sent this tribute to Nineveh. In this inscription Sennacherib silently admits that he could not conquer Jerusalem and returned to Nineveh, but "the fear of the majesty of his dominion overwhelmed" Hezekiah and he was ready to pay tribute. Such a record would not redound to the honor of Sennacherib's prowess. It testifies only to Hezekiah's cowardice, in fearing that Sennacherib would attack him again. Therefore it seems that Hezekiah sent ambassadors to Lachish offering his submission to Sennacherib. But the tribute he demanded was too much, and Hezekiah refused to pay it. Thereupon Sennacherib sent his commander-in-chief to Jerusalem demanding unconditional surrender. Jerusalem, well provided with food and water, could stand a siege for years. But there was trouble in Babylonia, and Sennacherib was desirous to return to the East, and he could not afford to leave behind a strong army for the siege of Jerusalem. He postponed its conquest

for another time. Hezekiah feared the return of Sennacherib and declared himself ready to pay the tribute which Sennacherib demanded. If Hezekiah had trusted in the Lord, there would have been no need for him to deplete his treasury for this purpose. Thus under stress of circumstances Hezekiah lost his trust in the Lord, notwithstanding that he was told by Isaiah: "Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come unto this city, nor shoot an arrow there, neither shall he come before it with shield, nor cast a mound against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and he shall not come into this city, saith the Lord" (II Kings 19.32-35). However, it would put Hezekiah in an unfavorable light to credit him with such a cowardly deed, to deplete all his resources on account of fear lest Sennacherib return again. Now we have seen that Sennacherib deprived Judah of the largest part of its territory and divided it among the Philistines. Hezekiah submitted to Sennacherib under the conditions that he should restore to Judah this territory. And it may indeed have been restored to Judah sooner or later. There is no indication that under the reign of Manasseh and his successors the whole country of Judah was not under their rule. Thus it seems indeed that he received back these territories from the Philistines on the command of Sennacherib. The country being re-united, it gradually recovered from its depression. Anyhow, Jerusalem enjoyed this distinction—that it was the only city in the West which the Assyrians were unable to conquer. This must have rankled in the heart of Sennacherib, and in the year 682 he tried again to conquer it.

The prophet Isaiah was of course deeply grieved to see that the misfortune that had befallen Judah, instead of humbling the corrupt and immoral nobility, seeing in it a just chastisement of the Lord for their misdeeds, should serve as a pretense and as licence for disregarding the Lord's commandments, accusing Him of having done a grievous

wrong to Hezekiah, or doubting His power altogether. A good many of the nobility lost their estates in the conquered territory of Judah. It is very probable that it was these men, who urged Hezekiah to submit to Sennacherib in order to get back their estates. Being accustomed to a life of pleasure and luxury, it was difficult for the impoverished nobility to change their habits and to lead a frugal life. They tried to obtain their means of living in the same manner as before, at the expense of the common people, by committing flagrant acts of injustice and oppression. Internal evidence leaves no room for doubt that it was during this period that Isaiah uttered the following denunciation against the leading classes: "On what part will ye be yet stricken, seeing ye stray away more and more? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint; from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and festering sores: they have not been pressed, neither bound up, neither mollified with oil. Your country is desolate; your cities are burned with fire; your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by floods. And the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, we should have been like unto Gomorrah" (1.5-9). But there can be little doubt that this denunciation made very little impression on the ruling classes. The misfortunes of Judah undermined their belief in the God of Israel, and no prophet was able to convince them that it was fully deserved, and that it was merely an act of grace on the part of the Lord, if the state did not cease altogether with the fall of Jerusalem.

This historical conception may shed light on the religious conditions under the reign of Manasseh. Bearing in mind that Hezekiah was the most righteous king of Judah since the days of David, how can we explain that his reli-

gious fervor had no effect upon his surroundings? That this was actually the case, we see plainly from the conduct of Manasseh. If the most intimate counsellors of Hezekiah had been imbued with his religious spirit, they would have seen to it that Manasseh, who was only 12 years old at his succession to the throne, should follow in the footsteps of his father. How did it happen that this king did become the most inveterate enemy of the religion of Israel and the most cruel persecutor of all faithful devotees of the Lord? He was told by the counsellors of his father of his father's exceptional devotion to the God of Israel, of his punctilious observance of all His commandments, but also of his final downfall and misery as a fitting reward for his righteousness. However, the counsellors did not inform Manasseh of the corruption and injustice of the leading classes, and that all the miseries of the state were due to their conduct. Therefore it is no surprise that the young boy conceived a bitter hatred toward the Lord and His believers, and was firmly resolved to eradicate this belief from among the people of Judah. Jeremiah (15.4) and the Book of Kings (II, 24.3-4) declared that the destruction of Judah was decreed by the Lord on account of the deeds of Manasseh who filled Jerusalem with blood from one end to the other.

Thus the erroneous conception of Hezekiah that he had been wronged by the Lord instead of being rewarded for his righteous conduct caused indeed the final destruction of Judah. Considering that it was due to Sennacherib's invasion of Judah, we might say that this king actually succeeded in his aim to destroy Jerusalem, about a century after his death, when the Assyrian empire was no more than a memory. He had taunted the God of Israel that he was no more powerful than the other gods who were unable to protect their countries against the power of Assyria. But the Lord protected Jerusalem for the sake of His own name. However, the leading classes in Judah adopted the same view after his invasion. In the time of the prophet Zepha-

niah there were Judeans who "said in their heart: The Lord cannot do good, nor can He do evil" (1.12). It was thus just that He should have disassociated Himself from the place upon which His name was called and permitted it to come into the hand of Judah's enemies. We may therefore see Divine Justice in the fate of Judah.

History often repeats itself. The same may hold true of the history of Judah. There arose a king of the type of Hezekiah, about half a century after his death, in the person of Josiah. We have already compared these two Judean kings and observed that each of them was in a class by himself in his devotion to the God of Israel. Josiah was more strong-minded than Hezekiah and used force for the re-establishment of the Mosaic religion in Judah. He did not shrink from shedding the blood of the idolatrous priests in Bethel and other Northern Israelitish sanctuaries. We have seen that there is no record that he did the same in Judah. The *Kemārim* were not killed, as they were non-Jewish priests. Nor would it have been proper to kill any man on account of having been an idolator, as it was forced upon him by Manasseh. But Josiah did it in Israel. This was of course unjustifiable from a legal point of view, considering that the idolatrous priests of Israel were merely faithful to their ancestral traditions. They ought not to have been treated as apostates who consciously turned away from the God of Israel and His commandments. From an historical point of view we may seriously doubt whether the priests so ruthlessly slaughtered were not real worshippers of Jahveh and whether their only crime was image-worship. But for Josiah image-worship meant apostasy. However, Josiah used the same means for the re-establishment of the worship of the Lord that Manasseh had used for extirpating it. He had shed the blood of the faithful worshippers of the Lord and Josiah imitated him and shed the blood of the worshippers of the idols. Thus Manasseh was responsible for the wrongs that Josiah committed in his reforms.

However, it is still exceedingly strange that he should not have killed any idolator in Judah. The blood that Manasseh had shed was done by his executives. A good many of them must have been still alive at that time, and it seems that they escaped with impunity. If so, Josiah was not a bloodthirsty zealot after all, and why should he have acted differently in Israel? But the very fact that Josiah should have entered Samaria, which was an Assyrian province, without interference from the Assyrian governor, shows clearly that he entered there as conqueror. If there was an Assyrian governor, he was powerless. But in the year 621, the Assyrian state was restricted to Nineveh, and a few provinces in Mesopotamia, if any, and had already lost all its foreign dominions. Under such conditions it was natural that Josiah, the descendant of the house of David, should have claimed Israel as his inheritance, and this he did. He entered this country with a sufficient force and took it into possession. The foreign colonists could not prevent it. The small number of Ephraimites who were still there would have had no objection to being united with Judah, though formerly there was not much love lost between Ephraim and Judah. Now it is natural that Josiah should have extended his religious reforms also to Samaria. The people at large were not much interested in religious affairs and it did not matter to them what kind of religion they practiced. The religion that Josiah introduced was after all that of their own ancestors. But the only opposition came from the priests. If the Mosaic religion had been introduced, they would have lost their position, and their sanctuaries would have been closed, just as it happened in Judah. Thus these priests refused to recognize the Mosaic Law, and incited the Ephraimites to do the same. Therefore it is natural that Josiah should have condemned them to death. If the Judean priests of the sanctuaries would have refused to recognize the Mosaic Law, Josiah would have treated them in the same way. We see then that the

Ephraimite priests were not killed on account of their idolatrous practices but for their refusal to abandon them. How could Josiah have acted otherwise? The Ephraimites being members of the house of Israel, the observance of the Mosaic Laws was obligatory upon them just as upon the Judeans, and Josiah could not have exempted them. Their disobedience was nothing short of high treason against the united state of Israel and Judah which was now established on the basis of the Mosaic Laws.

There can scarcely be any doubt that during that period there were Ephraimites who wholeheartedly returned to the Lord, as seen from the words of Jeremiah: "Thus saith the Lord: A voice is heard in Ramah, Lamentation, and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children; She refuseth to be comforted for her children, Because they are not. Thus saith the Lord: Refrain thy voice from weeping, And thine eyes from tears; For thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; And they shall come back from the land of the enemy. And there is hope for thy future, saith the Lord; And thy children shall return to their own border. I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself: 'Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, As a calf untrained; Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned, For Thou art the Lord My God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented, And after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh; I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, Because I did bear the reproach of my youth?' Is Ephraim a darling son unto Me? Is he a child that is dandled? For as often as I speak of him, I do earnestly remember him still; Therefore My heart yearneth for him, I will surely have compassion upon him, saith the Lord" (31.15-20).

Now the superscription of the Book of Jeremiah reads: "The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, to whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.

It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah, king of Judah, unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month." This superscription divides the prophetic activity of Jeremiah into two periods: the first in the 13th year of Josiah, and the second from the reign of Jehoiakim to the destruction of Jerusalem. But if this prophet's activity lasted from the 13th year of Josiah's reign to the end of Judah's state, was there any need for dividing it into two periods? This division evidently states that there was an intermission in his prophetic activity, that after Josiah's 13th year Jeremiah disappeared from the scene of Judah and re-appeared again with the reign of Jehoiakim. But what happened to him and where may he have been during the 18 years that intervened between these two periods (625-608)? This prophet at the very beginning of his activity was not in favor with his own people, the priests of Anathoth, on account of his religious point of view with regard to sacrifices and rituals. We have already dwelt on his religious conceptions. His teaching was distasteful to them, and they tried all means to restrict him. But he could not restrain himself and had to find an outlet for his religious fervor. Now it was 625 when the Assyrian empire completely declined, and lost all foreign possessions, and among them also the Assyrian dominion of Samaria. This gave the prophet an opportunity of imitating Amos in going to North Israel, to the remnant of Ephraim, and trying to bring them back to Israel's religion. Under Assyrian rule their religious conceptions deteriorated altogether. They were nominally worshippers of Jahveh, but practically they knew nothing of His commandments. Jeremiah became their religious teacher, instructing them in the religion of Israel. But religion is everywhere the concern of a few select persons who are spiritually inclined. This holds true also of the Ephraimites. Not all of them were willing to

accept his teachings. As we know Jeremiah's conceptions, we may be certain that he came into collision with the Ephraimitic priesthood. Their opposition proves that his activity was not without success, that he was able to convert a good many to his views. But priests are, as a rule, of great influence with the people at large, and the Ephraimitic priests had no doubt a strong party of faithful devotees to their brand of the Jahveh-religion and they tried to expel the prophet from Samaria, as did formerly the high priest Amaziah of Bethel, who tried to drive Amos away from Israel, saying: "O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there" (Amos 7.12). They may have succeeded in expelling him. Now may we not conjecture that the prophet appealed for help to Josiah, either personally or by letters, in behalf of the faithful worshippers of Jahveh in Samaria? This may have happened in the fifth year of his activity, 621, the year of Josiah's re-establishment of the Mosaic religion in Judah. If Jeremiah did appeal to Josiah for help, is it conceivable that this intensely righteous king should not have readily responded to this appeal? This was a religious duty, and it gave him at the same time the chance of realizing the aspirations of the Davidic dynasty to reunite Israel with Judah under its rule.

This historical conception explains not only Jeremiah's prophetic utterances with regard to Ephraim but also the political situation of this period. We understand the presence of Josiah in Samaria, and the reason for his treatment of the Ephraimitic priests in such a cruel way, as they were religiously and politically his opponents. Under the rule of Josiah, Jeremiah could now continue his prophetic activity in Samaria without opposition. The syncretistic sanctuaries did not exist any longer. Their adherents could no longer practice their religion openly. The condition in Samaria was in every respect identical with that of Judah. But this condition underwent a radical change

with the death of Josiah in the battle of Megiddo in 608. Samaria was taken away from the house of David by Pharaoh Necho and became an Egyptian province. The former priests who escaped from Josiah, and may have sought a refuge in Egypt, returned to Samaria and opened again their sanctuaries, and they of course repaid the faithful worshippers of Jahveh for their sufferings with the help of the Egyptian officials. If Jeremiah had remained there, he would have been treated as were the Ephraimitic priests by Josiah, and he speedily returned home to Judah. This explains why we find him there again at the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim. However, his religious activity in Samaria was not altogether in vain. After the destruction of Jerusalem, when Gedaliah the son of Ahikam was appointed governor of Judah and was murdered by Ishmael, "there came certain men from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, even fourscore men, having their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves, with meal-offerings and frankincense in their hand to bring them to the house of the Lord" (Jeremiah 41.5). These people must have been faithful worshippers of Jahveh in that they had come to offer sacrifices in Jerusalem, seeing that there was no lack of sanctuaries in Samaria. They evidently intended to offer sacrifices in the temple, though it was a ruin. There must have been small communities in Samaria which still observed the prophet's teachings. The fate of these men who were slain by Ishmael must have had a disastrous effect on the religious conceptions of their communities. The Ephraimitic priests did not fail to proclaim their fate as a divine retribution for having been a party to Josiah's execution of the Israelitish priests and for having disregarded their own sanctuaries sanctified by the presence of the Patriarchs of Israel who sojourned there, and having gone to the inferior sanctuary of Judah which never had any association with the history of the Patriarchs. They may have even accused the Judeans of having mur-

dered them, and such a charge was bound to intensify the dislike of the Ephraimites toward the Judeans.

Now we said that the religious conditions of Samaria were identical with those of Judah. We observed that religious ideas can be disseminated only by moral suasion and not by force. The largest part of the leading classes of Judah submitted to the Mosaic laws out of fear of the king. In his zeal he would not have hesitated to extirpate them, if they had shown any sign of resistance or unwillingness to accept the laws. He would have treated them like the Ephraimitic priests of Samaria. His zeal would have blinded him to all political considerations. The possibility that by his measures he might excite the enmity of the leading classes, and they might rise or conspire against him, never entered his mind. But the nobility was too effeminate to expose their lives for religious principles. They adopted the policy of submitting to him, but in their hearts they were far from being devoted to the established religious principles. The seed that Manasseh had sown continued to bear fruit even under the reign of this pious king, and secretly idolatry was just as prevalent as before.

We understand now what the biblical historian meant by saying: "Nevertheless the Lord turned not from the fierceness of His great wrath, wherewith His anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations wherewith Manasseh had provoked Him. And the Lord said: 'I will remove Judah also out of My sight, as I have removed Israel, and I will cast off this city which I have chosen, even Jerusalem, and the house of which I have said: My name shall be there'" (II Kings 23.26-27). It would be wrong to see in this prophetic judgment an irrevocable fate. If Josiah's reforms had been a real success, and the people had earnestly turned to the Lord in accordance with this king's intentions, the Lord would have pardoned all their former transgressions. The blood shed by Manasseh would not have been remembered against them.

But the re-establishment of the Mosaic religion, as far as the rank and file of the ruling classes were concerned, was a mere sham and pretense. They were still religiously and morally corrupt as under the reign of Manasseh. They were even worse, as hypocrisy practiced toward God is more to be condemned than open rebellion. Therefore there was no reason for revoking the divine decree pronounced against Judah and Jerusalem. This was the conception of the biblical historian.

Surely there was a small minority that turned to the Lord with all their hearts. They might have done so, even if the Book of the Law had not been discovered. They looked upon the reforms of Josiah as a complete success, and were not aware of the fact that the others submitted to the reforms out of fear of the king. But the fall of Josiah in the battle of Megiddo tended to undermine their religious belief, in being horrified to see such an exceptionally righteous king suffering such an undeserved fate. The idolators might have seen in it a fully deserved punishment by the gods for having overthrown their creed and having destroyed their sanctuaries. They may have taunted the believers in the Lord that He was without any power to assist His votaries. And there may have been not a few who denied His existence altogether. Therefore it was natural to find idolatry and all kinds of immorality after Josiah's death even stronger than in the past. The conditions were again as in the days of Hezekiah, after Sennacherib's invasion of Judah, due to the erroneous belief that the Lord ought to have protected righteous kings from misfortunes, if there was divine justice. There was even more reason now to complain of the Lord's injustice to Josiah than in the days of Hezekiah. The true believers earnestly thought that there had been a real transformation of all religious and moral conditions in accordance with the Mosaic Law, and that henceforth this Law would be established as the Constitution of Israel. But

in the days of Hezekiah it was well known that his righteous conduct had no influence on the ruling classes who were so bitterly denounced by the prophets Isaiah and Micah.

Consequently those who in their hearts were still addicted to idolatry began idolatrous practices immediately after the death of Josiah. They justified this step on the ground that they had lost their belief in the Lord due to the fall of this king and the ensuing misfortunes that had come upon the people who had entered into a covenant with the Lord to observe His commandments. This experience convinced them that there was no reliance upon the Lord. They pointed out that the country had been in a better state under Manasseh's reign when the people had worshipped idols. In adopting idolatry, the leading classes freed themselves from all moral obligations which were the fundamental principles of the Mosaic Law. They could now freely commit all acts of injustice and oppression and indulge in all kinds of vices. There may have been not a few among the former believers who acknowledged the justice of this argument, and naturally lost their belief in the Lord. They did not know that this argument was fundamentally wrong. It never occurred to them that the covenant with the Lord into which these men entered was a fraud and an abomination to the Lord, as they never intended to become His votaries. They did not perceive that the fate of Judah was well-deserved for having mocked the Lord. We have seen that the Judeans who immigrated into Egypt actually believed that all their misfortunes had come upon them for having become faithless to the worship of the gods (Jeremiah 44.16-18).

The people's conception, in attributing their miseries to their infidelity toward the gods, was fundamentally opposed to that of the prophets. This difference was due to a different religious conception concerning the worship of Jahveh. In the people's view, it consisted of sacrifices, rituals, and festival-observance, without moral obligations.

This was the sum and substance of their religion. If any misfortune befell them, they did not question their own religious conduct toward Jahveh, seeing that in their minds they were His faithful votaries. They could not but ascribe their misfortunes to the wrath of the gods kindled against them for having forsaken their worship. The prophets, however, denounced such a nominal worship of Jahveh as an abomination. In their view, it was even worse than idolatry, since calling upon the Lord, and at the same time committing all kinds of immoral acts, was a desecration of His name. Thereby His religion was lowered to the level of the idolatrous creeds. Therefore they rightly declared that all their miseries were the consequences of their evil deeds. The belief of the Judeans in Egypt, that they owed their prosperity to the gods, was not of recent date. Even Hosea had said of Israel that it ascribed its prosperity to the favor of the Baalim, saying: "I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink" (2.7). Now their claim that they had been prosperous, when they worshipped other gods, was far from being a fact. But people sunk in deep adversity will look upon earlier times when conditions had not been so bad as a period of prosperity. So also Israel in the wilderness, whenever they suffered want, looked back with great regret to the period of their serfdom in Egypt and wished themselves to be in the former condition.

We said that due to the outcome of the battle of Megiddo, in which Josiah had lost his life, the people of Judah lost their faith in the power of Jahveh. But it seems to have been a foolhardy act on the part of Josiah to measure his forces with those of Egypt. Being Egypt's neighbor, he ought to have known the prosperous conditions of this country under Psametichus who in his long reign was able to consolidate his empire. It was now much stronger than centuries before, though his main forces consisted of Ionian and Carian mercenaries. His son Neco succeeded

to a rich and well organized empire. When he entered upon a career of conquest to reclaim Syria as a former dominion of Egypt, he must have had a strong army at his disposal. True, there was not a great power to oppose him. The empire of Assyria had already completely disappeared in 612 with the fall of Nineveh. The kingdom of Babylon was still an unknown quantity. The Medes or Umman-Manda, who were the real conquerors of Nineveh, made no claim to the Syrian territories. However, since Necho claimed the whole of Syria, the Western states were in danger of losing their independence, and it was to be expected that they would unite themselves against him. He must have set out with a mighty force to overcome any opposition. On the other hand, it may be taken as a matter of course that Josiah did not have a considerable army of foreign mercenaries. As long as he was tributary to Assyria, he was not in a position to keep up such an army. An attempt to gather a strong force would have aroused the suspicion of Assyria, which was still ruled by its famous king Ashurbanipal, though it was already decayed to the core. After 625, when Assyria was no more than a shadow of its former greatness, and Josiah ceased to pay tribute, he could afford to hire an army of mercenaries. But there was no reason for doing it, as there was no fear of foreign aggression on the part of the neighboring states in the West.

However, if he did gather a large force out of fear of Egypt, this king ought to have possessed so much political wisdom as to know that with regard to military resources he could never compete with those of the Egyptian empire. But bearing in mind his religious zeal, we may rest assured that he detested foreign heathen, and he would not have established an army consisting of foreigners. Thus his army, with which he intended to oppose Necho's forces, consisted of Judeans and most of them belonged to the leading classes. But did he not know anything about his own subjects, that they were neither willing nor able to fight? To

be sure Josiah considered it his duty to fight for the protection of his country, well knowing that Necho, when making tributary the whole of Syria will do the same to Judah. But if Josiah had possessed any political sagacity, he would have tried to ally himself with Egypt, and Necho would have joyfully accepted such an alliance, and as an ally Josiah would have been treated with more consideration than the rest of Syria. The only explanation of Josiah's military exploit without adequate power is to see in it his absolute faith in the Lord and his perfect trust upon His assistance. He was fully aware of the fact that his own army was neither in numbers nor in military prowess and skill the equal of the Egyptian army and was even far beneath it. But he said with Jonathan, Saul's son: "There is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few" (I Samuel 14.6).

Josiah firmly believed that he had established a state after the heart of the Lord in accordance with the Mosaic commandments, and could firmly rely upon the divine promises to Israel, if they hearken unto the voice of the Lord, of which one promise was: "The Lord will cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thee; they shall come out against thee one way and shall flee before thee seven ways" (Deut. 28.7). In calling upon the Judeans to rise for the independence of their country, Josiah may have used the words of Moses on the crossing of the Red Sea: "Fear ye not and stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will work for you to-day" (Ex. 14.13). By marching with his feeble army against the mighty forces of Egypt, Josiah challenged the unbelievers in demonstrating the power of the God of Israel. But the unbelievers of Judah had no trust in the challenge at all, knowing well that the covenant, as far as they were concerned, was mere parade and pretense. Thus if the Lord is powerful indeed, He would not come to their assistance; and if He was not, His assistance would be in vain. Only

a small part of the people who earnestly made the covenant with the Lord accepted this challenge as a test of the power of the Lord. The death of Josiah and the defeat of the Judean army was bound to destroy the faith of the true believers, as the power of the Lord was tested and found wanting.

However, in reading the description of the fateful event of Megiddo, we cannot but question whether there was a real battle. It reads: "In his days Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates; and king Josiah went up against him; *and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him*" (II Kings 23.29). Now is this the way of describing a pitched battle, in which two armies oppose each other, that Pharaoh slew him as soon as he had seen him? Was Josiah indeed so daring as to attack Necho personally and kill him at once? Why does not the biblical historian say anything about the fate of the Judean army? If we take this description literally, we may earnestly doubt whether there was a battle at all. It is quite possible that Josiah before the battle entered into negotiations with Necho, and there he was treacherously murdered. But it is scarcely conceivable that Necho should have acted in such a dishonorable way. Josiah had a good many enemies among the leading classes of Judah who bitterly hated him, and would have been glad to get rid of him. There were the priests of the Judean high places who lost their position and their subsistence by Josiah's re-establishment of the Mosaic religion. Finally, if the priests of the Ephraimites, of whom a good many may have found a refuge in Egypt, had had any chance of murdering him for the killing of the priests of Samaria, they would have done it. It is very reasonable to assume that he was murdered by one of these three classes, who were among the courtiers of Necho. That this king did not commit this disgraceful act may be deduced from the fact that he permitted the people of Josiah to take his body home to

give him a proper burial, as it is stated: "And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre" (ibid. 23.30). The version of Chronicles concerning the event of Megiddo, which is rather obscure, indicates indeed that there were negotiations on this occasion between Josiah and Necho. It reads: "After all this . . . Necho king of Egypt went up to fight against Carchemish by the Euphrates; and Josiah went out against him. But he sent ambassadors to him, saying: 'What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war; and God hath given command to speed me; forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that He destroy thee not?' Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho, from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo. And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants: 'Have me away; for I am sore wounded'" (II Chron. 35.20-23). This legendary description of the event may have originated with the pro-Egyptian party, which tried to clear Egypt from the guilt of having wronged Judah, while the version of Kings comes from the anti-Egyptian party. The latter if properly interpreted is obviously historical.

The fate of Josiah, no matter how it happened, was bound to undermine the Judeans' belief in the power of the Lord and in His justice. Therefore it is no surprise if the children of Josiah became indifferent to the worship of the Lord. Of all his successors, the biblical historian states that they "did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord" (II Kings 23.32, 37; 24.9, 19). But we have nowhere the express statement that they were idolators. While Jeremiah charged the people with idolatry (5.7, 19; 7.9, 17-18; 9.13; 11.10, 17; 17.2; 19.4-5; 22.9; 25.6), we do not find the same charge against one of Josiah's successors. We have

dwelt already on the wickedness of Jehoiakim and the weakness of Zedekiah. The former was a cynical scoundrel who cared just as little for the worship of other gods as for that of Jahveh, to whom it did not matter whether his people worshipped Jahveh or the Baalim. Surely on his succession Jeremiah himself considered him a Jahveh-worshipper, as in the exhortation addressed to this king, the prophet said: "Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy people that enter in by these gates. Thus saith the Lord: Execute ye justice and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor; and do no wrong, do no violence, to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place" (22.2-3). But the prophet did not exhort this king not to worship other gods.

Josiah was an idealistic dreamer who believed he had established "a Kingdom of Priests and a Holy Nation," in accordance with the Mosaic ordinances religiously and morally. Jeremiah testified of him that his personal conduct was above reproach, that he did execute justice and righteousness and judged the cause of the poor and needy, crediting him with the highest religious quality "the Knowledge of the Lord" (22.15-16). His children, however, who were not of the same type, knew the real conditions of the people, being well aware of the fact that all his measures had not wrought any change, religious or moral, in the conduct of the overwhelming majority of the leading classes. Those who practiced idolatry and committed acts of injustice and oppression, before the discovery of the Book of the Law and the ensuing reforms, continued their practices even afterwards, provided that they could do so with impunity. They were forced to restrain themselves and had to take all possible precautions not to be caught. Josiah was no respecter of persons and would not have hesitated to impose the supreme penalty on men of the

highest rank, if convicted of idolatry or of other crimes against the Mosaic laws. It is very questionable, whether he would have hesitated to mete out the same justice to his own children, if they were found guilty of any of these transgressions. Of a man who "turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to the law of Moses," we may certainly expect that "he did not recognise his own brethren and did not know his own children," in the administration of justice and righteousness.

Josiah's children may have chafed under the strict rule of their father whose only aim in life was to live as man and king in conformity with the Mosaic Code and expected his children to conduct themselves in the same way. But he came to the throne as a child of eight years. As king he did not possess playmates, and he came in his early years under the influence of the priests, and piety had become his ruling passion. He knew almost nothing of the happenings in the intimate circles of the leading classes. It was different with his children. They associated with the children of the nobility who did many deeds which if known would have brought them before the royal bar of justice, and may well have shared in their pleasures and debaucheries. His children like the others of the leading classes did not lose their belief in Jahveh on account of the final fate of their father. They never expected their father's feeble army to prevail over that of Egypt. Having been raised in the Jahveh-worship, they accepted it even later, but without its moral obligations. They may have regarded the discovered Mosaic Code as a pseudepigraphy imposed by the priests upon their idealistic father, as modern scholars indeed maintain. This is by no means farfetched. In an age when men express the opinion: "The Lord can neither do good nor can He do evil" (Zeph. 1.12), there may have been not a few men who saw in the discovery of the Book of the Law a priestly imposition practiced upon

the mind of a naive and credulous king. Modern scholars are even inclined to impute to the prophet Jeremiah such a view, which they see in his words: "How can ye say: 'We are wise, and the Law of the Lord is with us'? Behold, truly in vain hath wrought the lying pen of the scribes" (8.8). Out of filial regard for their father, they did not practice idolatry, but disregarded the Mosaic Laws in denying or doubting their genuine character.

It was different with the people at large. Their belief in Jahveh was completely destroyed by the death of Josiah, and idolatry became again prevalent as formerly, and Jeremiah could say: "According to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to Bosheth" (11.13). Jehoiakim did not interfere with the idolators. It was not because he was liberal-minded, as we know that he was a tyrant and oppressor. If the Jahveh-worship had been of any use to him, he would have enforced it, though personally he neither believed in Jahveh nor in other gods, as we have observed. There was a practical and selfish reason for permitting the people to revert to the former worship of the idols. If the people had been worshippers of Jahveh, they could have demanded justice in His name, in insisting upon their rights in accordance with the Mosaic Code which had been accepted in a solemn covenant. But they had broken the covenant and had turned away from the worship of Jahveh. If so, they could no longer base their rights upon a moral code. The king could now be a law unto himself. The people had no appeal against his decisions. On the contrary, he could fully justify his conduct, if he wronged idolators. As worshipper of Jahveh, and as such he was considered, he could legally condemn idolators to death, and their property would have reverted to the state. It was merely generosity on his part, if he did not make full use of his rights. Thus the idolators dug their own graves, as it were, in breaking the covenant which

was binding for both king and people. They had cast away the only protection they had against injustice and oppression, and repudiated the legal code that guaranteed their rights. This king would have freely indulged in idolatry as did the people, if it had served his self-interest. But he found the worship of Jahveh of more advantage for the policy of conducting the government on autocratic principles. The Mosaic Code was still in force, and the king could impose penalties upon the people for its non-observance, but the idolatrous people could not claim its protection, since they had repudiated it.

With regard to Jehoiachin, the son and successor of Jehoiakim, from Jeremiah we know that he could not be charged with any guilt, but had suffered the fate of captivity on account of the deeds of his father. This prophet said: "Is this man Coniah a despised, broken image? Is he a vessel wherein is no delight? Wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O land, land, land, Hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord: Write ye this man childless, A man that shall not prosper in his days; For no man of his seed shall prosper, Sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah" (22.28-30). From the words of Jeremiah we may gather that Jehoiachin was a boy of excellent character and in favor with all classes of the people. He was expected to become a good king. This was fully recognized by the prophet that he was a "vessel of delight." But he must nevertheless be cast out on account of being the son of Jehoiakim. The same may be gathered from the preceding passage, where Jeremiah declared in the name of the Lord: "As I live, saith the Lord, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, were the signet upon My right hand, yet would I pluck him thence" (22.24). But if so, Jeremiah's opinion of Jehoiachin would seem contrary to that of the biblical historian who states: "And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to

all that his father had done" (II Kings 24.9). However, since it is expressly stated that he was carried into captivity along with the Queen-Mother (ibid. 24.15), and Jeremiah likewise refers to the Queen-Mother (13.18), it is obvious that Jehoiachin was still a minor, and the Queen-Mother ruled the country, and under her rule the conditions of immorality and of injustice were not improved. The biblical author could rightly state that his government was just as bad as that of his father.

As to Zedekiah, we have already pointed out that he was a believer in the Lord, but a weakling, and thus a plaything in the hand of the nobles, as he freely admitted, when they asked for the death of Jeremiah: "Behold, he is in your hand; for the king cannot do anything against you" (Jer. 38.5). We have seen that Jeremiah's trial for having predicted for Jerusalem the fate of Shiloh occurred in the "beginning of *the reign of Zedekiah*" and not of *Jehoiakim*, and that this date in the Masoretic text is a scribal error. This error is older than the Greek version of the Book of Jeremiah, as it is also found there. If it had happened under Jehoiakim's reign, Jeremiah's case would have been brought before him, and he would have shared the fate of the prophet Uriah. It was different under the reign of Zedekiah who was powerless, and the ruling classes could decide the matter without consulting him. Zedekiah himself, who had faith in Jeremiah's predictions, was too weak to side with him against the nobles, and could not condemn him. Therefore he refused to have anything to do with this case, and advised the princes to deal with him according to their own conscience. There was also a special reason why Zedekiah should have been partial to Jeremiah. He was the only prophet who declared that Jehoiachin would never return from the captivity, and accordingly Zedekiah was his legitimate successor. But Hananiah and other prophets predicted the speedy return of Jehoiachin (28.4; 29.31). Thus they looked upon Zedekiah as a mere

regent who would have to descend from the throne on the return of Jehoiachin. He could not demand the reverence due to a legitimate king. The people hoped and prayed for the return of Jehoiachin. But the prophetic announcement of Jeremiah was that none of the seed of Jehoiakim would ever sit on the throne of David, that the succession rightly belonged to Zedekiah who was his next-of-kin, and that he could claim the throne. On this point the prophet Ezekiel contradicted Jeremiah in his simile of the cedar (Ezekiel 17) predicting that the dynasty of Jehoiachin will be re-instated. Zerubabel indeed claimed the throne in accordance with Ezekiel's prophecy, but did not succeed in accordance with Jeremiah's prediction.

CHAPTER VIII

The Western confederacy—Judah's refusal to join it—Its reason known to the allies—Their intention of overthrowing the Davidic dynasty—Its results—The realization of the prophetic teachings—The danger to the religion of Israel—Isaiah aligning himself with the Davidic dynasty—The position of the Levitical priests—The joy of the common people—The former slogan of the rebels—The depredations of the allies in Judah—The softly flowing waters of Shiloah—The new social order—Its ephemeral character—The arrival of the Assyrian army—The son of Tabeel—Tiglathpileser's campaign in Armenia—His aid invoked by Ahaz—The unbelief of Ahaz in Isaiah's divine message—His fears—Tiglathpileser received as benefactor—Isaiah's description of his speedy arrival—The outcome of Isaiah's advice if heeded by Ahaz—The impression from the narrative of the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion—The version of the Book of Chronicles—Its historical sources—The battle of Pekah against the Judean army—The siege and conquest of Elath by Rezin—Pekah's first siege of Jerusalem—The second siege by the united forces of Aram and Israel—The last six chapters of the Book of Zechariah—The overwhelming evidence for their pre-exilic origin—Their reference to the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion of Judah—Judah an unwilling ally—The views of the pre-exilic prophet—His reference to the unsuccessful siege of Jerusalem—The retreat of the allies—The confusion in their armies—The Judeans recognizing the hand of the Lord—The attack of the Judeans on the retreating allies—The peace between the Judeans and the Davidic dynasty—The sally of the besieged—The execution of the royal prince, royal steward, and grand-vizier by the rebels—The general public mourning for the royal prince—"The cutting off of three shepherds in one month"—Prophetic interpretations of historical reminiscences—The pre-exilic prophet Zechariah son of Jeberechiah—The faithful witness—Chapter 14—Two prophecies mixed up—"The two tails of smoking firebrands"—Rezin and Pekah heads of the ruling classes and not of their nations—Ahaz declining the prophet's offer of a sign—Its reason—The prophet's answer—The former devotion of the Judeans to the house of David—Their patience exhausted—The prediction of Immanuel's birth—The fulfillment of the prophecies—The captivity of the East-Jordan and Galilean tribes—The negotiations of Ahaz with Assyria unknown to Isaiah—"The separation of Ephraim from Judah"—The separation of the Judeans from Jerusalem—A comparison of chapter 7 with chapter 8—The ambiguous legend *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*—The faithful witnesses—The legend written in Hebrew and Aramaic—The tablet to be exposed—The naming of the proph-

et's son—The overthrow of Damascus and Samaria—The punishment of the Judeans in the near future—The waters of Shiloah compared with the many and mighty waters of the Euphrates—The pro-Assyrian and the pro-Allies parties—Isaiah denounced by both parties—The sanctification of the Lord's name—Isaiah discredited in the eyes of the people—The prophet's hope—The living words of the Lord—The binding up of the attestation and sealing of the oracle—The current belief in necromancy—Its practice prohibited—A true oracle—The prophet being challenged—His activity in vain.

THE prophet Isaiah since his induction into the prophetic office had labored for several years to improve the social conditions of Judah by prophetic exhortations and denunciations. His labors were in vain on account of the aristocratic system which was the basis of the Judean state, as we have seen. But what he could not achieve by his prophetic activity, quite different agencies tried to accomplish by means of force. In dealing with the events of Northern Israel during the last decades of the existence of this state, we have pointed out that the murder of Pekahiah the son of Menahem, who was a vassal of Assyria and thereby its protégé, by Pekah, who succeeded him as king of Israel, could not pass with impunity, and Pekah was well aware of this fact. He well knew that Tiglathpileser would not accept his submission. It was a matter of personal honor of this Assyrian king. Menahem had paid him a thousand talents of silver to confirm the kingdom in his hand, and thus he made himself responsible for the safety of his dynasty, which included also his successor. The only chance of saving his own life was to cast off the Assyrian suzerainty and to persuade other Western states to do the same. Thus he aimed to re-establish the Western confederacy against Assyria. That the former confederacy fell to pieces was due to Menahem who was the first to break away. Pekah, who overthrew Menahem's dynasty, could not be held responsible for the former and tried to atone for it by establishing this confederacy again. The allies were certain that Pekah would remain a faithful ally, as it was with him a

matter of self-preservation. While the prime mover of this confederacy was Pekah, it was headed by Rezin the king of Aram. For him it meant not only to defend thereby the independence of his country against Assyria, but also to regain its position as the foremost state in the West. The confederacy was joined by the Philistines, Edomites and other Western states.

However, the allies felt themselves not strong enough without Judah. If Judah should remain neutral, Tiglath-pileser could use this country as the base of his military operations. Now we need not doubt in the least that the internal conditions of this country and its social structure were well known to the allies. We have already fully discussed its weak points. Its social system was different from that of all other states in the Near East, which was due to the permanency of the Davidic dynasty. Such a system may have existed in Babylonia under the Cassite dynasty which endured about 600 years. But there the foremost influential class was not the nobility but the priesthood, and this class was not hereditary, and even people of low birth could enter into it and rise to high positions, if possessing scholarly ability and being properly educated. But in Judah both the nobility and the priesthood were hereditary and no member of the lower classes could ever rise to a higher position. Though both Jotham and Ahaz refused to enter into this confederacy without giving any reason for their refusal, as they could not openly admit the inner weakness of their state, the allies knew perfectly their motives. But was there any reason why Judah should be different from all other states? The people at large, who suffered from such a system, would have gladly parted with it, and there was no reason for its existence if it was to the disadvantage of the allies and the only obstacle to joining the Western confederacy, which should free the Western states from their arch-enemy.

Therefore, there was only one way out of this difficulty:

the overthrow of the Davidic dynasty, which would involve that of the nobility. In that case the estates of the nobility would be either bestowed upon the new nobility created by the new dynasty, which would be taken from the lower ranks of the population, or divided among the people. The landed property which had been wrongly acquired by the nobility in the course of generations would revert to the descendants of the original owners. The people would of course appoint judges from their own ranks who would not be partial to the rich and favor them at the expense of the poorer classes. They would restore liberty to all who had been sold for their debts. The common people provided with arms and properly trained by the allies could easily accomplish such a revolution. Enjoying all political rights, the people would willingly espouse the cause of the allies. They would be ready to lay down their lives for the independence of their country, and to fight against Assyria. This was the plan of the allies in invading Judah. It was far from their minds to conquer Judah and to divide it among themselves. They could not have been so blind to all political conditions as not to perceive the danger to the existence of all the Western states looming ahead from Assyria. A conquered country would have been of little use to them under such precarious conditions. True, Judah was rich in natural resources and they could use them for war purposes. But a conquered land needs an army for keeping it in subjection, and they could not spare their man power, when it was badly needed in the war against Assyria.

This was a grand plan and easy to accomplish. If it had been properly carried out, it would have meant the realization of the prophetic teachings of establishing justice and righteousness in the country. Who knows whether some of the prophets of that period, despairing of the success of their missions, did not fully approve of the overthrow of the Davidic dynasty? But if this plan, in which

religious conceptions played no part whatever, had succeeded, we may question whether the religion of Israel would have survived. If the people of Judah should have been indebted to Rezin and Pekah for their social salvation, they would have had better reason for serving the Baalim, that were at that time generally worshipped in Northern Israel, or the Aramean gods, than serving the Lord who had done nothing to redeem them from their miseries. If that had been the outcome, the success of the overthrow of the present oppressors would have been merely ephemeral. There would have been no moral code to guarantee the execution of justice, and, after a short period, all the social ills would have returned and become even worse than before. We may therefore doubt whether the prophets of this period did not look with fear at such a plan. While we do not know what the other prophets, of whom we have no records, might have thought of such a revolution, there can be no question about the position of Isaiah who aligned himself with the house of David. This would have been quite natural, if he was a member of the royal family, as tradition declares. However, he was too great a prophet not to abandon the cause of this dynasty, if its overthrow had helped to realize his prophetic ideals. But he was an historian and could clearly see the outcome of such a newly established order, even if it should be successful as planned. Though the dynastic overthrows in Israel prevented the rise of a real hereditary nobility such as that of Judah, which was of advantage to the social conditions of the people at large, such overthrows always meant wholesale murders, the extermination of the adherents of the overthrown dynasties, and it was a dreadful prospect that the same should be the condition of Judah. It could not be prevented, as there would always be ambitious individuals aspiring to the throne. As for the priests of Jahveh, they must have trembled for their own existence, if the Judeans should turn away from the God of Israel. The common

people held them responsible for all the prevailing abuses and oppressions, as Temple and Palace were looked upon as a single institution. They knew almost nothing about the real state of the priesthood of Jerusalem, that they possessed no influence whatever with the government and the nobility. Thus the priesthood would have been involved in the downfall of the dynasty and of the nobility. If so, the prophets and the priests had good reason to be faithful supporters of the Davidic dynasty, even if its overthrow would temporarily greatly improve the social conditions.

But with regard to the common people and all those that hoped to improve their fortunes by such a change, they must have embraced the plan of the allies enthusiastically and must have received them with the highest gratitude as their benefactors and liberators. With the exception of tribal affinity, and this could be applied to Judah only and not to Benjamin, there was not the least reason for their loyalty to the Davidic dynasty. They could justly use the slogan of the former rebels against the house of David: "We have no portion in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse" (II Sam. 20.1). If the people could have rid themselves of the dynasty and the nobility, Judah would have been as a newly conquered country, even in a better condition than at the time of the conquest of Canaan, and the land could have been divided equally among the agricultural classes. The idea was simplicity itself. It must have occurred to many Judeans in each generation, when brooding over their wrongs by the ruling classes. Its realization was impossible, as long as they depended upon their own power. Now they had an opportunity to carry it into effect with the help of the allies. The Judeans would have been the most stupid people if they had rejected it. The allies would have been equally stupid, if they had not suggested it, in saying to them: "Ye have no portion in David, neither have ye an inheritance in the son of Jesse!"

It would certainly be unhistorical to credit both of them with such stupid minds.

But let us for a moment disregard the plan of this social revolution, and look at the condition of Judah at the time of its invasion by the allies. The allies at the beginning had not the slightest intention of overthrowing the Davidic dynasty, if they could have persuaded Ahaz to ally himself with them. The allies not being able to achieve their purpose by means of persuasion, tried to accomplish it by force, in harassing Judah by raids. This happened already at the time of Jotham (II Kings 15.37). There was indeed not the least ground for Judah to incite the enmity of Assyria, seeing that the Assyrians had never entered in its territory, and Judah had nothing to gain even in case of success. If Ahaz refused to enter into this confederacy, it was not due to the advice of Isaiah, who was opposed to foreign alliances. But even if the ruling classes had been able and willing to fight, it would have been foolhardy on Ahaz's part to expose the welfare of the country, when there was not the least need for it, and in a lost cause, as he believed, since many past experiences had shown the weakness of such confederacies. On the firm refusal of Ahaz to become a member of this league against Assyria, the allies invaded Judah and besieged Jerusalem. In fact, Judah was attacked from all sides. While Israel and the Arameans invaded Judah from the North, the Edomites expelled the Judeans from Elath, the chief harbor of Judah, which formerly belonged to the Edomites (II Kings 16.6; II Chron. 28.17). This proves that the Edomites had joined this confederacy. The Philistines as members of this confederacy attacked Judah from the West (II Chron. 28.18). Tiglathpileser severely punished them for their disloyalty to Assyria in the year 734 on his invasion of the West.

While the allies could not gain possession of Jerusalem, and Ahaz and his partisans in the besieged city were not in imminent danger, and they naturally expected relief from

an Assyrian invasion into the territories of the allies, the inhabitants of the open country must have suffered greatly from their depredations. In such a plight many of the Judeans were ready to accede to the demands of the allies. They no doubt urged Ahaz to submit and to become a member of the confederacy. However, he considered this invasion a minor evil in comparison with the vengeance of Tiglathpileser on the overthrow of the confederacy, and justly refused to surrender. Thus the partisans of the allies saw no other way to end their troubles than to change the allies from enemies to friends by the overthrow of the Davidic dynasty. They were the people to whom Isaiah referred: "Forasmuch as this people hath refused the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and *rejoiceth* with Rezin and Remaliah's son; Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up against them the waters of the River, mighty and many, even the king of Assyria and all his glory" (8.6-7). If the Judeans *rejoiced*, they must have had reason for rejoicing, and not on account of this alliance, but because they would have a chance of fighting against the formidable power of Assyria. Something must have been the outcome of this alliance that filled their hearts with joy. But we have seen that the overthrow of the Davidic dynasty meant a new social order for the Judean people at large. They became for the first time since the establishment of the monarchy masters of their own destinies, and were even in a better condition than before that time. The land and all the estates of the upper classes belonged to them and they could freely dispose of them for their own benefit. This was certainly a matter for rejoicing. Their hearts overflowed with gratitude toward the allies, in having made them free and prosperous. But there was one bitter drop in their cup of joy: the power of Assyria, which they would have to overcome to make their new social order permanent. If they should not, their fate would be death and captivity. This is what Isaiah meant in referring to Assyria's invasion

of Judah. As a matter of fact, however, the overthrow of the Davidic dynasty was a tempest in a teapot, and the Judeans never had a chance to establish the new social order, as Tiglathpileser speedily arrived in the West, and the confederacy fell to pieces. The Judeans at once submitted to Ahaz and renewed their allegiance to the Davidic dynasty. Ahaz being a faithful vassal of Assyria, Tiglathpileser did not invade his country. But Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled 35 years afterward under the reign of Hezekiah, when Sennacherib invaded Judah. We might say that its fulfillment was Measure for Measure. The country of Judah rebelled against the Davidic dynasty, while the people of Jerusalem remained faithful toward it. In the same way the country of Judah suffered from Sennacherib's invasion, while Jerusalem remained unconquered.

Isaiah declared clearly that it was the intention of the allies to overthrow the Davidic dynasty: "Because Aram hath counselled evil against thee, Ephraim also, and the son of Remaliah, saying: Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set up a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeel" (7.5-6). We do not know who the son of Tabeel was. The name is no doubt Aramaic corresponding to an Aramaic name *Tabi-Al* or *Tabi-Alla* "God is good." However, notwithstanding the Aramaic form of this name, it is not likely that he was an Aramean native. The plan of the allies was to please the Judeans, and it might have had the contrary effect, if they had set a foreigner on the Judean throne. The Assyrians always set a native on the throne, when the preceding king showed himself unfaithful to them. Rezin may readily be credited with enough statesmanship to know the precarious condition of a foreign king in Judah. The son of Tabeel may have been a prominent Judean in the service of Rezin who had adopted an Aramaic name.

It was not fear of the allies that induced Ahaz to invoke the aid of Tiglathpileser, in sending him a heavy tribute

and offering him the submission of the country. If the people of Judah had remained loyal to Ahaz, he would never have taken such a desperate step as to cast away the independence of his country. He was quite certain that Tiglathpileser would finally overcome this Western confederacy without being invited to do so. But there was the danger that the Judeans would set up a rival king, and he did not trust the loyalty of his supporters to hold out till the arrival of the Assyrian army. At that time Tiglathpileser was occupied with a campaign in Armenia, and was besieging its capital *Turuspa*, situated on Lake Van. This country close to Assyria was for many generations the most troublesome enemy of the Assyrians, and its subjection was of far more importance for Assyria than that of the Western countries. Nevertheless Tiglathpileser raised the siege of this capital and departed for the West. There can be no doubt that it was due to the embassy of Ahaz, who stripped the temple and emptied his own treasure-house to win his favor. But for this embassy, Tiglathpileser would not have left the kingdom of Ararat without its complete subjection.

Ahaz did not trust in Isaiah's assurance, saying to him: "Keep calm, and be quiet, fear not, neither let thy heart be faint, because of these two tails of smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and the son of Remaliah" (7.4). A king of the type of Ahaz who cared so little for the religion of Jahveh, as he subsequently showed, was not likely to accept a prophetic message pronounced in His name, that the intentions of the allies and their Judean adherents "shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass" (7.7). Thus the loss of Judah's independence was the outcome of the irreligious conduct of Ahaz and his unbelief in the power of the Lord to save him from the power of the allies. But we have seen that the conception prevailed that the people were judged by the conduct of the king. If so, was there any reason for the divine protection of an idolatrous and corrupt government? However,

if Ahaz had believed in Jahveh's power, he would have abandoned his godless conduct and thereby would have become worthy of divine protection. Therefore, Isaiah concluded his address to Ahaz: "If ye will have no faith, surely ye shall not be established" (7.9).

However, though Ahaz was a thoroughly corrupt character, it would be unjust to say that he, like Menahem, was prompted to recognize the suzerainty of Tiglathpileser by nothing more than fear for his throne. This was not the only reason for doing it. There were some among his counsellors who might not have cared whether he was overthrown or not and nevertheless advised him to submit to Assyria. If he had been overthrown and the Judeans had chosen a partisan of the allies as their king, Judah would have suffered the fate of the other disloyal states, and was certain to lose its independence, and its people might have been carried off into captivity. Being an unbeliever, there was no other way for him but to invoke the aid of Assyria at the expense of Judah's independence. Tiglathpileser, in heeding his request to come to his assistance, and thereby abandoning the Armenian campaign which would have been the glory of his achievements, if he had brought it to a successful conclusion, put Judah under obligation and deserved its gratitude. The government and the leading classes of Judah, being saved by his speedy arrival, looked upon him not as a conqueror who deprived their state of its independence but as a benefactor who fully deserved their loyalty. Therefore it is natural that both king and people should have begun to imitate Assyrian manners and customs, and the practice of idolatry was a consequence.

Isaiah himself had not the least doubt about the speedy arrival of Tiglathpileser. If he had given the allies time enough to consolidate their confederacy, the outcome of this campaign would have been doubtful. The prophet announced this conviction in his description of the arrival of

the Assyrian army: "And He will lift up a banner to the *nations* from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth; and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly; none shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken; whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent; their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind; their roaring shall be like a lion, and they shall roar like young lions, yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and carry it away safe, and there shall be none to deliver" (5.26-29). The description of the march of this army reads like a cuneiform inscription in which an Assyrian king boasts of the prowess of his army. Assyrian kings in their annals describe how they underwent all fatigues of hunger and thirst, cold and heat, climbing the highest mountains, marching through deserts, in order to take the enemy unawares, so that he should not expect the Assyrian army so soon, and not have a chance to make proper preparations for resistance. The people, to which "the Lord will lift up a banner, and hiss to it from the end of the earth," are of course the Assyrians. Armenia was considered in antiquity as "the uttermost part of the North."

Isaiah had advised Ahaz to be quiet, and not to enter into any negotiations with Assyria. If Ahaz had heeded his advice and held out against all odds, he would have deserved the gratitude of Assyria, in endangering the existence of his own state for its sake. It would have been a matter of honor with Tiglathpileser to reward Ahaz for his faithfulness. It would have been questionable whether Tiglathpileser would have imposed upon him a tribute at all. He would have treated Ahaz as an ally rather than as a vassal, considering that his country was devastated for the sake of Assyria. It would have been in the interest of this empire to have a state in the Western region wholly devoted

to it voluntarily and not out of fear. We may rest assured that, if it should have imposed a tribute on Judah, it would have been of a nominal nature and more in the form of a contribution to the campaign than a real tribute exacted from its subject peoples. Thus if Ahaz had acted in accordance with the advice of the prophet, he would have put Assyria under obligation, as by his refusal to join the confederacy the allies had to waste their resources in the war against him, and therefore it was easy for Tiglathpileser to overcome them. If after all he had deprived Judah of its independence, it would have been a matter of ingratitude on his part, and the Judeans would have looked upon him as a tyrant; they had no reason for imitating the manners of enemies and oppressors and adopting their idolatrous conceptions. Thus Ahaz by rejecting the prophet's advice deprived Judah of its independence and destroyed the religious conceptions of its people.

In the narrative of the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion of Judah as found in the Book of Isaiah (7.1), and in the Second Book of Kings (16.5), there is nothing said about a battle between the allies and the Judeans, and we gain the impression that the allies invaded Judah without any resistance on the part of the Judean government, but could not conquer Jerusalem. However, is it conceivable that the Judeans permitted the allies to enter their country without offering any resistance? There must have been a number of fortified cities, and it would seem that these cities opened their gates to the allies, and no force was required on the part of the allies to conquer them. If so, it would seem that the Judeans actually made common cause with the allies and declared themselves ready to enter the Western confederacy, against the policy of the Judean government. This we may gather from the opening lines of the narrative of this event which read: "And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Aram,

and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to war against it; but could not prevail against it" (Isa. 7.1). Considering that Jerusalem was only the capital of Judah, we would expect the expression: "went up against Judah and Jerusalem." The author's expression would be correct, if Judah had already been taken, and there remained only the capital which refused to submit, as happened later in the days of Hezekiah, when Sennacherib had conquered all the fortresses of Judah (II Kings 18.13). But does it stand to reason that the Judean government did not do anything to keep the allies out of Judah? This would be without a parallel in Israel's history.

However, while neither Isaiah's narrative nor the author of Kings expressly refer to a battle between the allies and Judah, the author of Chronicles has a good deal to say about the events that happened in Judah during that period. He narrates: "And the Lord his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Aram; and they smote him, and carried away of his a great multitude of captives, and brought them to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter. For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah a hundred and twenty thousand in one day, all of them valiant men; because they had forsaken the Lord, the God of their fathers. And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah the king's son, and Azrikam the ruler of the house, and Elkanah that was next to the king. And the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand women, sons and daughters, and took also away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria" (II Chron. 28.5-8). Now modern scholars, as a rule, look askance at the Book of Chronicles as an historical source which had been compiled from a priestly point of view, and on the whole disregard its statements. But this is unjust. The priestly author of Chronicles might have embellished the events described, but he did not

invent them, as he was not a plain liar. It is even questionable whether the embellishments were original with this author and not taken from historical sources to which he always refers. It is even very doubtful whether we are justified to look upon them as embellishments and not as plain historical facts, interpreted from a religious point of view. The same has been done by the compilers of Judges, Samuel and Kings. It is true, this priestly author is fond of large numbers which seem improbable. But while we may question the exactitude of those numbers, we have no reason to doubt the historical events described. No one would deny the historicity of the battle of Cunaxa, because Xenophon states that Artaxerxes II had at his disposal 900,000 men, and Ctesias and Diodorus maintain that they were only 400,000. The same may hold true of the events described by the author of Chronicles, that Pekah had slain 120,000 men and that 200,000 Judeans had been carried away into captivity, but we have no right to doubt that a great many Judeans had been killed in this campaign and a great many had been carried off captive.

With regard to Rezin, Chronicles states in general that he had smitten the Judeans and had carried away a great multitude of captives to Damascus, but does not say that he had taken part in this battle. But how did it happen that he was not present at this battle? He must have been engaged somewhere else, and this battle was fought by Pekah alone. The Second Book of Kings tells us almost explicitly the scene of Rezin's military exploits, saying: "At that time Rezin recovered Elath to *Edom*, and drove the Judeans from Elath; and the Edomites came to Elath, and dwelt there, unto this day" (16.6). This harbor must have been of great importance to the allies and strongly fortified. Its siege must have taken a considerable time. The prisoners that he carried off to Damascus were the inhabitants of Elath. Now while Pekah was able to overcome the Judeans, the partisans of Ahaz, we must not

imagine that he had not suffered any losses in this battle. His power being somewhat weakened, he perceived that he could not bring the conquest of Jerusalem to a successful conclusion and withdrew from the siege, waiting for the arrival of Rezin's army, which came to his assistance after the capture of Elath. From Isaiah's narrative of the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion which uses verbal forms in singular: עלה "he went up" and ולא יכול "and he could not," we may gather that first Pekah alone began to besiege Jerusalem, but his army was not large enough to invest it completely, and he raised the siege, waiting for the arrival of the Aramean army. The Second Book of Kings refers to the later siege which was undertaken by the united armies of Aram and Israel: "Then Rezin king of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to war; and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him" (16.5). But Isaiah's narrative refers to the attempt of Pekah to invest it with his own forces. The original form of its superscription probably read: "And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz, that Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to war against it; but could not prevail against it." The name of the Aramean king in this superscription may be regarded as a later insertion by a copyist, taken from the Book of Kings, and on the ground that Rezin was the real chief of the confederacy. He did not perceive that the Book of Kings refers to the investment by the united forces of Aram and Israel, while that of Isaiah refers to the attempt of Pekah to invest it alone. From this point of view, we understand the continuation of Isaiah's narrative, which reads: "And it was told the house of David, saying: 'Aram hath encamped with Ephraim.' And his heart was moved and the heart of his people, as the trees of the forest are moved with the wind" (7.2). "The people whose heart was moved" consisted of course of the adherents of the house of David, and not of the people at large, as the invasion was not directed against

the Judeans who had allied themselves with the Western allies.

But before we continue the investigation of our subject, we shall deal with the date of the last six chapters of the Book of Zechariah, which is closely connected with the subject under consideration. There is no need to dwell upon the fact that these six chapters do not belong to the post-exilic prophet of the sixth century to whom this book is ascribed. But admitting that these chapters are to be assigned to a different author, the only question under consideration would be whether their author was pre-exilic or post-exilic. The evidence pointing to a pre-exilic date is overwhelming: First, the kingdoms of Judah and Ephraim are still existing (Zechariah 9.10, 13; 10.6). Second, a partial exile of the Northern kingdom is implied (10.6, 8-10), and these prophetic utterances should thus be placed between 732-722. Third, both Assyria and Egypt are still powerful empires (10.9-11). Fourth, the prophet expects the enemy to come from the northeast destroying in order Syria, Phoenicia, and Philistia (9.1-7). Fifth, the prophecy that Hamath will be destroyed makes it obvious that it must be dated before 720, when Hamath was destroyed by Sargon. Seeing, however, that the prophecy concerning Hamath is closely connected with Damascus which was conquered by Tiglathpileser in 732, it is evident that chapter 9 must be assigned to a period before this date. Sixth, the people still consulted *Teraphim* and *Kosmim* (10.2), which certainly was not true of the post-exilic period. Seventh, an open rupture is expected between Ephraim and Judah (11.14), and this actually happened in the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion of Judah. Eighth, the importance of the Festival of Tabernacles (14.16, 18, 19), which is characteristically pre-exilic, as in post-exilic times the Festival of Passover was of far greater importance. In pre-exilic times, this festival had been celebrated only under the reign of Hezekiah (II Chron.

30.1-26) and of Josiah (II Kings 23.22). The importance of the Festival of Tabernacles can be seen from the fact that Jeroboam transferred its date from the fifteenth of the seventh month to the fifteenth of the eighth month (I Kings 12.32).

But the most important evidence for the pre-exilic origin of the last six chapters found in the Book of Zechariah is the astounding fact that we find in them the political situation of Judah, during the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion of this country, Judah's rebellion against the house of David, making common cause with its enemies, and fighting against Jerusalem. In comparison with this evidence all others pale into insignificance. The oracle concerning this event begins: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of staggering unto all the peoples round about, and upon Judah also shall it fall to be in the siege against Jerusalem" (12.2). Its historical background is the Western confederacy which the house of David refuses to join, and therefore is attacked by the neighboring nations round about, Aram, Israel, Edom and Philistia. Judah being exposed to the attacks of the allies declares itself ready to join them and helps in the siege of Jerusalem. This prophet sees in Judah an unwilling ally, and on this point differs from Isaiah who accuses them of rejoicing with Rezin and the son of Remaliah. Isaiah is a faithful adherent of the Davidic dynasty, but is nevertheless in sympathy with the Judean people at large. He knows the reason of their disloyalty to the house of David, and cannot condemn them.

The prophet continues: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will make Jerusalem a stone of burden for all the peoples; all that burden themselves with it shall be sore wounded, though all the people of the land be gathered together against it" (12.3). By using such a figure the prophet has in mind the use of stones in the erection of buildings. In vain should the nations round about seek to

fit Jerusalem into the political structure which they intend to erect, the Western confederacy. They will cut their hands in trying to lift it up, as it is not a smooth stone. Any attack upon Jerusalem will prove disastrous to those who undertake it. In verse four, the prophet describes the retreat of the allies on the arrival of Tiglathpileser: "In that day, saith the Lord, I will smite every horse with bewilderment, and his rider with madness; and I will open Mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the peoples with blindness" (12.4). On learning the news of the arrival of the Assyrian armies, the besiegers will be thrown into a panic. Each of them will try to save himself, and there will be hopeless confusion, and the horses used to gentle treatment will be bewildered in being roughly treated by their masters smitten with madness. A defeated enemy that has to give up a region taken in possession is more cruel to the inhabitants than a victorious enemy. The Judeans also will be in danger on that day from the retreating allies, who will try to do them as much harm as possible, burning and destroying everything in their way, so as to leave a desert behind them. Therefore, the prophet says that the Lord will open His eyes upon them in protecting them from these enemies. The horses being bewildered, will act as if smitten with blindness, and will not follow the lead of their masters and rush headlong to destruction.

When this day shall arrive, the Judeans will recognize the hand of the Lord who saved Jerusalem from the power of its enemies, and will perceive their wrong in having associated themselves with its enemies: "And the chieftains of Judah shall say in their heart: There is strength to the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the Lord of hosts their God" (12.5). The leaders of Judah will see that they had misled the people in advising them to rise against the house of David and will try to show their good will toward it in attacking the retreating enemies and destroying them. This

is what the prophet means in saying: "In that day will I make the chieftains of Judah like a pan of fire among wood, and like a torch of fire among sheaves; and they shall devour all the peoples round about, on the right and on the left; and Jerusalem shall dwell *in peace* in her own place (even in Jerusalem)" (12.6). The inhabitants of Judah who had been trained in warfare against Assyria, as we have seen, will now use their skill against the allies. If this happened, not many of them reached their own countries. In the mountainous country of Judah, it was not difficult for the inhabitants of Judah to ambuscade them. This made it easier for the Assyrians to overcome them. Thus they put Tiglathpileser under obligations for having destroyed his enemies. On the other hand, they could not be blamed for having joined the allies, seeing that they did so under duress, as they claimed. Now we may rest assured that the ruling classes hoped to avenge themselves for their sufferings on the disloyal Judeans in putting the leaders to death, depriving a great many of their estates, and raising their taxes. This would have aggravated the economic conditions. The prophet was strictly opposed to it, as he like Isaiah condemned the system upon which the Judean state was based. If this should have happened, the Judeans might have requested Tiglathpileser to be permitted to form a state for themselves, and we may rest assured that he would have granted this request, as the Assyrian political maxim was *divide et impera*. Therefore it was advisable to accept their submission, and there was a treaty between the Judeans and the Davidic dynasty. Therefore the prophet said: "The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah *first*, that the glory of the house of David, and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not magnified above Judah" (12.7). The *first act* was to restore the unity of the country, as otherwise the country might have been divided between the two parties.

Having dealt with the conditions of Judah after the re-

treat of the allies, the prophet goes back to the time when Judah heard the tidings of the Assyrians' arrival. We may certainly assume that the besieged people did not permit the allies to retreat unmolested. The besiegers, thrown into confusion, did not care to fight but to cover their retreat, while the besieged people attacked them valiantly. The prophet refers to this attack: "In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that stumbleth among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as a godlike being, as the angel of the Lord before them" (12.8). Though feeble from the long siege and stumbling in their walk out of weakness, and some of them were more affected by the privations they suffered from than others, even they will be filled with courage and endowed with strength to attack the enemies, fighting like David the typical hero of Israel. However, the house of David, warriors by nature and training, will be endowed with superhuman strength, and become godlike heroes in this battle, just as if the angel of the Lord would march before them and lead them to victory. Now the allies in their swift retreat from Jerusalem had to leave behind most of their baggage not to be encumbered by it on their flight, and this of course became the spoil of the besieged, and there were plenty of provisions for the starved out people. Simultaneously with this retreat, there happened another event which was a matter of great rejoicing to the house of David. An heir was born to the throne of David, as Isaiah had predicted. Isaiah was now vindicated as a true prophet of the Lord, and on this occasion broke out into a hymn of triumph: "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, Thou hast increased their joy. They joy before Thee as men joy at harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod

of his oppressor, Thou has broken as in the day of Midian. For every shoe worn in tumult, and every garment stained in blood, shall even be for burning, for fuel of fire. For a child hath been born unto us, a son hath been given unto us; and the government shall be upon his shoulder" (Isa. 9.1-5). The prophet refers now to the treatment of the allies at the hand of Tiglathpileser: "And it shall come to pass in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that have come against Jerusalem" (12.9).

We have already referred to the historical record of the Second Book of Chronicles with regard to the battle between Pekah and Judah at the beginning of the invasion. There it is stated that Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah, *the king's son*, and Azrikam, *the steward of the house*, and Elkanah, the second to the king, *the grand vizier* (28.7). Considering that Ahaz must have been very young at his succession to the throne, this *king's son* could not have been his younger brother, but must have been the younger brother of Jotham. He was evidently the commander-in-chief of the Judean army. The death of this royal prince who was no doubt the foremost person in the kingdom filled the heart of the adherents of the Davidic dynasty with despair. The others Azrikam and Elkanah were the highest officials of the land, the real rulers of the people. While we have not the least reason to question the historicity of this event, that they were actually murdered, it is rather improbable that the Northern Israelites should have been guilty of such an atrocious deed. They were no doubt captured in that battle. But even the Assyrians were not so sanguinary as to kill the prisoners that had been captured on the battle-field. Nor is it likely that the Israelites who but recently had been on the best of terms with Judah for many generations, since the rise of the Omri dynasty, should have murdered 120,000 Judeans in this battle. But everything is clear as soon as we know that the Judeans rebelled against the house of David and made

common cause with the allies. It stands to reason that a good many of the ruling classes lived in the Judean towns at the time of this rebellion, and only a few of them had a chance of fleeing to Jerusalem. The rebels certainly did not spare the lives of their oppressors who fell into their hands. The rebels who allied themselves with the allies and fought in their ranks of course paid their oppressors in full. The Ephraimitic Zichri was probably the commander-in-chief of the army and perhaps temporarily the governor of Judah, and the rebels clamored for the lives of those high officials who had been captured in this battle. Now it is not likely that those leaders of the rebels who committed these atrocities should have escaped with impunity. But knowing their fate they saved themselves by flight to Samaria or to Egypt. Those who remained in Judah were not guilty of these crimes, but could not prevent them. The only charge that could be raised against them was their disloyalty to the Davidic dynasty.

As long as the siege of Jerusalem lasted, there was no mourning for the murdered royal prince so as not to discourage the people in the besieged city, who in despair might have opened the gates to the enemies. But when the siege was over, after the people had rejoiced at their escape, the government proclaimed a day of mourning and lamentation for the whole country. The body of the slain prince was probably brought to Jerusalem, and there he was given a royal funeral in the sepulchre of the Davidic dynasty. The coffin with the body was exposed that the people should gaze upon it. This is what the prophet says: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication, and they shall look upon *him* whom they have thrust through; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him as one is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadad-

rimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of David apart and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart" (12.10-14). Though the main occasion of this period of mourning, which may have lasted thirty days, was the murder of the royal prince, the very representative of the house of David, there was no family among the ruling classes that did not lose a great many members in this rebellion. The families that are singled out were those that suffered most. The mourning was so severe that no sexual intercourse was permitted, and men had to separate themselves from their wives. Now we have said that the people held the Levitical priests responsible for the social ills, in currying favor with the ruling classes, and closing their eyes to all their misdeeds, and it is natural that they were not spared in the general slaughter. "The family of the house of Levi" represents the chief Levitical clan, the officiating priesthood of Jerusalem, while "the family of Shimei" refers to the Levites in general. This family may have been singled out, because it just happened that it suffered more than the other Levitical families. Or the other families officiating at the high places and having no connection with the Judean government may not have suffered at all, while the family of Shimei may have been closely connected with the priesthood of Jerusalem, and performed there the Levitical services.

We have said that Maaseiah, Azrikam, and Elkanah, who had been murdered during the rebellion, were the real rulers of the country. Naturally, they should have been held responsible for the prevalence of injustice and oppression, and they atoned for it with their lives. The prophet refers indeed to these social evils: "Thus said the

Lord my God: 'Feed the flock of slaughter; whose buyers slay them, and hold themselves not guilty; and they that sell them say: Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich; and their own shepherds pity them not. For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land; but, lo, I will deliver the men every one into his neighbour's hand, and into the hand of his king; and they shall smite the land, and out of their hand I will not deliver them.' . . . *And I cut off the three shepherds in one month*" (11.4-8). Here evidently the prophet refers to the civil war in Judah, and the three shepherds cut off in one month are those highest officials of Judah who had been murdered by the Ephraimite Zichri at the demand of the rebellious Judeans.

We see then that some of the prophecies found in the last six chapters of the Book of Zechariah cannot but refer to the events of the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion of Judah. In fact, they are so surprisingly exact in all details that they look like prophetic interpretations of historical reminiscences rather than prophecies predicting future events. But who was this pre-exilic author of these prophecies? And if he lived in the 8th century, how did it happen that the compilers of the prophetic writings assigned his utterances to a post-exilic prophet, Zechariah the son of *Berechiah*? However, there was a contemporary of Isaiah whose name was Zechariah the son of *Jeberechiah*. Now the names *Jeberechiah* and *Berechiah* are just as identical as *Hezekiah* and *Jehezekiah*, which are used interchangeably. But the pre-exilic bearer of this name was one of the "faithful witnesses" who signed Isaiah's tablet on which it was written *Maher-shalal-hash-baz* (Isa. 8.2). His fellow witness was the high priest Uriah. If Isaiah calls him a "faithful witness of the Lord," we may well assume that he was a man of prophetic rank and the author of the last six chapters of Zechariah. Now there was a true tradition that they belonged to Zechariah the son of *Jeberechiah*, and

thus it is natural that the compilers of the prophetic writings identified him with the post-exilic bearer of this name.

If this prophet, who predicted that the intentions of the allies and their Judean partisans will come to naught, was indeed Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah, we understand why Isaiah should have selected this prophet as one of the faithful witnesses that the divine announcement against the allies, expressed in the words *Maher-shalal-hash-baz* "The Spoil hasteth, the Prey Speedeth," will be fulfilled. The other witness was Uriah the chief of the Levitical priesthood who was likewise certain that the Lord would not permit the plans of the allies to succeed, and he may have publicly prophesied to that effect. It is natural that he should have been a faithful adherent of the house of David, as the Levitical priesthood would have lost its position if the rebellion of the Judeans had been successful. However, while this prophet shared Isaiah's view that the allies would be overthrown by Assyria, he differed from him in regard to the fate of Jerusalem. Isaiah was certain that Jerusalem will never fall into the hands of the allies. This prophet predicted, during the siege of Jerusalem, that the city will be taken and half of the people will be carried into captivity, but the Lord will soon come to their assistance and the allies will be destroyed. This prophecy is found in chapter 14. However, if this prophet lived in the 8th century, there can scarcely be room for doubt, that his prophetic utterances are mixed up with another prophecy which is of an apocalyptic nature. The original prophecy reads: "Behold, a day hath come unto the Lord, when thy spoil shall be divided in thy midst. For I have gathered all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, but the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fighteth in the day of battle" (14.1-3). "And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord

shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour. And Judah also shall fight against Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the nations round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance" (14.13-14). In order to understand this prophecy we must bear in mind that not all inhabitants of Jerusalem were faithful adherents of the house of David. The poorer classes of Jerusalem were in sympathy with the rebellious Judeans, and if they had had a chance they would have willingly made common cause with them, and delivered the city into the hands of the allies. If the city had been taken, they had nothing to fear. Only the loyal supporters of the Davidic dynasty would have been carried off into captivity, while the others would have been permitted to remain. The prophet of course expected the arrival of the Assyrians, but believed that they would arrive after the fall of the city. The prophetic prediction that the Lord will go forth and fight those nations is not meant in an apocalyptic sense, but in prophetic parlance which considers nations and kings instruments of the Lord, as Isaiah said: "O Asshur, the rod of Mine anger, in whose hand as a staff is Mine indignation! I do send him against an ungodly nation, and against the people of My wrath do I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets" (10.5-6). But Jerusalem will now be in the hand of the allies and also Judah shall now take part in the siege of this city to reconquer it. This would be the meaning of this prophecy, if we separate it from the apocalyptic sections. If, however, we should insist upon the unity of this prophecy, it would be very difficult to assign it to the author of chapter 12, which contains a sober historical survey of the events during the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion of Judah, and does not exhibit any supernatural element. But there may have been another prophet, besides Isaiah and Zechariah, who may

also have believed in the imminent fall of Jerusalem, and delivered an apocalyptic prophecy, which became mixed up with that of Zechariah. As a matter of fact, its apocalyptic interpretation would make this prophecy quite obscure, since no reason is given for the attack of Jerusalem by the surrounding nations.

Having dealt with the position of the pre-exilic prophet Zechariah, we return to the prophetic activity of Isaiah during the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion of Judah. This prophet told Ahaz not to fear Rezin and Pekah, comparing them to "two tails of smoking firebrands." Their intention was, as we have seen, to overthrow the Davidic dynasty, and to establish a new Judean state upon the system of equality, which would be willing to enter the Western confederacy. However, the most important question under consideration was whether the overthrow of the house of David with the nobility would have strengthened the position of the allies to the extent of repulsing the aggression of Assyria. If this was not the case, the establishment of a new state of Judah on a basis of relieving the oppressed classes from their oppressors would be short-lived. The victory of Assyria would enslave both the oppressors and the oppressed. To be sure, Judah would now be strong and willing to exert all its power against Assyria, as the common people, freed from the nobility, and being their own masters, would enthusiastically lay down their lives for its independence. But their participation in the war against Assyria would have been effective only if Aram and Israel had possessed their pristine vigor. Then there would have been a chance that in conjunction with Judah they might have freed the Western countries from the yoke of Assyria. But this was far from being the case. Aram was but the shadow of its former greatness. Israel was torn by its internecine civil wars. The overthrown party would not have hesitated to join the Assyrian army as soon as it entered the country. Isaiah aptly com-

pared Aram and Israel to tails of smoking firebrands which would soon be consumed. He was a statesman and knew the conditions of these countries. Judah would have constituted a valuable item in the assets of the allies, if they had not been in a condition of bankruptcy, and had possessed some assets of their own. Their ill-success was with the prophet a foregone conclusion, and Judah if allied with them was bound to share their fate.

Isaiah actually knew the political conditions of Rezin and Pekah. He explains why the intentions of the allies shall not come to pass: "For the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin; and the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son" (7.8-9). Now this explanation seems very obscure. But just as *Jerusalem* stands for the Judean government, the court, the ruling classes, distinguished from *Judah*, which means the people at large, the same holds true of both *Damascus* and *Samaria* which referred to the seats of the government. The prophet meant to say that Rezin is not the real king of the *Arameans*. He is merely the head of the ruling classes whose seat was the capital of the Aramean kingdom. But the people at large care nothing for him. Therefore his position is shaky. This is the case also of Pekah. He is merely the head of the court which has its seat in the capital of Israel, and therefore he styles himself king of Israel. But the people at large detest him, and are merely waiting for a chance to overthrow him. Therefore it would be imprudent to be associated with them.

Some time later, seeing the vacillating mind of Ahaz, Isaiah came again to him, saying: "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God, either deep in the *Sheol* or high up above. But Ahaz said: I will not ask, neither will I try the Lord" (7.10-12). Now there must have been some reason why Ahaz should have rejected the fair offer of the prophet to convince him of the truth of the prophetic prediction. If

Ahaz did believe in the power of the Lord, he ought to have accepted the challenge of the prophet. If he did not believe, there was even more reason for accepting it, as thereby he would have exposed the prophet as a fraud in the eyes of his adherents. However, before the prophet had come to him for the second time, Ahaz had secretly sent an embassy to Tiglathpileser, imploring him to come to his assistance, and offering him his allegiance, as the biblical historian informs us: "And Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, saying: 'I am thy servant and thy son; come up and save me out of the hand of the king of Aram and out of the hand of the king of Israel' " (II Kings 16.7). Now if Ahaz had accepted the offer of Isaiah and he and his court had convinced themselves of the truth of the prophet's prediction, his loyal adherents could have rightly accused him that due to his stubbornness, in not being guided by the prophet's advice, he had thrown away the independence of his country and had squandered all his treasures. Therefore, for his own protection he was forced to decline the prophet's offer, and hypocritically disguised this rejection with a mask of piety, saying that it was not permitted to tempt the Lord, in accordance with Deuteronomy 6.16: "Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God."

Isaiah, however, was not deceived by this show of piety, but ascribed it to unbelief. He was not aware of the fact that Ahaz had already offered his allegiance to Tiglathpileser. Isaiah thought that Ahaz did not want to be convinced of the power of the Lord, as in that case he would have been forced to recognize Him as the only God of Israel. Thereupon he said: "Hear ye now, O house of David: Is it a small thing for you to weary men, that ye will weary my God also?" (7.13). To what men did the prophet refer that they had been wearied by the house of David? The Judean people at large were from the very beginning the most faithful adherents of the Davidic dynasty, due to

tribal affinity. In their eyes the king, the anointed of the Lord, was infallible. They looked with scorn on the ephemeral dynasties of the Northern Israelites which destroyed one another and prided themselves upon the permanency of their own dynasty. The noble families descended from the officials appointed by their great king David who held the offices by right of inheritance were looked upon by the people at large with pride and reverence, in comparing them with the upstarts among their Israelitish brethren. They were regarded as being ennobled by divine grace. For many generations the people had no complaints against them, as the people were treated in a patriarchal manner by them, and considered it their duty to bow down to the Davidic dynasty. The idea of demanding equality with them never entered their minds. Nor did it occur to them to ask for a share and a voice in the affairs of the government. But what they did ask and to which they were entitled were justice, equity and humanitarian treatment as formerly before corruption among the ruling classes had set in. The government could have prevented the prevalence of injustice and oppression. But the house of David closed their eyes to all the wrongs of the people, which are so eloquently condemned by the prophets. The Judeans must have been in desperate straits, if they could conceive the idea of rising against their own tribal dynasty. If their patience had not been completely exhausted by the conduct of the house of David, they would never have consented to its overthrow. This is what Isaiah meant: Was it not enough that ye have wearied the men who rose against you, that ye should weary also my God that He should lose His patience with you and favor your enemies? The prophet said deliberately "my God," and not "your God," indicating thereby the reason for the rejection of his offer by the house of David, their unbelief in the power of the Lord.

Seeing that Ahaz refused his offer that he might choose

any sign to be wrought at once, Isaiah told him that the Lord Himself will choose a sign and Ahaz himself will later be convinced of the truth of his announcement, if he sees it fulfilled in the near future: "Behold, the young woman shall conceive, and bear a son, and she shall call his name Immanuel. Curd and honey shall he eat, when he knoweth to refuse the evil and choose the good. Yea, before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings thou hast a horror of shall be forsaken" (7.14-16). He thus announced that within a year or two, when the child is still in early infancy, before he knows the difference between palatable and unpalatable food, the countries of the allies will be forsaken of their inhabitants. The child which we may with all certainty identify with Hezekiah, as we already pointed out, was evidently born toward the end of the siege of Jerusalem, about 735-34. With regard to Aram, this prophecy was literally fulfilled in the years 733-32. Though Damascus fell when the child was at the age of two, before the fall of the city the whole country was terribly devastated and the people of Aram were carried into captivity. Tiglathpileser states that he had destroyed 591 localities. The Second Book of Kings records briefly: "And the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin" (16.9). But with regard to Israel, the prophecy was only partially fulfilled. Only the East-Jordan territories and Galilee were forsaken, whose inhabitants were carried off into captivity. We have observed that Pekah being a Gileadite, it stands to reason that the East-Jordan tribes were his main supporters. Who knows whether the same was not true of the inhabitants of Galilee. This would explain why only these Israelites were carried off into captivity. The reference to "curd and honey," which the child will eat, may mean that the land of Judah, eaten up by the allied armies, will in a short time become again as for-

merly "a land flowing with milk and honey." But it will take time to effect such a change, and this will happen when the child "knows to refuse the evil and choose the good."

Now if Isaiah had known the fact that Ahaz had sent an embassy to Tiglathpileser imploring him to come to his assistance, the destruction of the allies by the Assyrians would have been a foregone conclusion. No prophet was needed to foresee the results. It is thus evident that Isaiah did not know that Ahaz had already negotiated with the Assyrian king to come to his assistance. Otherwise the prophet could not have given such a sign that would be far from convincing. Ahaz, who was certain of the arrival of the Assyrian forces, must have mocked at the prophet's prediction among his courtiers. Therefore, it is natural that he should have disregarded it altogether. However, Isaiah later found out that Ahaz actually had made a fool of him, in not informing him of his negotiations with Assyria. We may assume that on this occasion, the prophet announced a severe punishment for the house of David: "The Lord shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria. . . . In that day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired in the parts beyond the River, even with the king of Assyria, the head and the hair of the feet; and it shall also sweep away the beard" (7.17, 20). While this prophecy was on the whole fulfilled in the days of Hezekiah by Sennacherib's invasion of Judah, it is evident that the prophet expected its fulfillment in the days of Ahaz. It is noteworthy that he referred to a time "when Ephraim separated itself from Judah." The misfortune was that the kingdom of David was greatly reduced in size and number of its subjects. Now this actually happened in the days of Sennacherib, who separated the towns of Judah from Jerusalem and divided them among the

Philistine kings, as we have seen, so that the kingdom of the house of David consisted only of Jerusalem. But Isaiah himself may have expected such an event to occur under the reign of Ahaz. We know that during his reign injustice, oppression, corruption, and idolatry grew apace. If before his reign the condition of the people at large had been bad enough, so that the Judeans in despair were willing to overthrow the Davidic dynasty, they must have become aggravated under his rule. From such a weak and corrupt monarch they could not expect any relief. The idea of making themselves independent and forming a state by themselves was no longer strange to the minds of the Judeans. They had tried it once, but it failed on account of the interference of the Assyrians who overthrew the allies with whom they had associated themselves. But was there any reason why they should not have appealed to the Assyrians themselves for relief, in permitting the Judeans to form a state for themselves? We have already pointed out that their conditions could not have been worse, and actually might have been greatly improved, if Judah had become an Assyrian province under the rule of an Assyrian governor. We may rest assured that Tiglath-pileser, who was a great statesman, and must have seen the advantage of cutting off Judah from Jerusalem and making it a separate state, would gladly have granted such a request. We have seen that the pre-exilic Zechariah feared such an event and advised the Judean government not to punish the Judeans for their disloyalty. Isaiah, however, believed that the corrupt conditions of Judah must inevitably lead to a separation of Judah from Jerusalem with the help of the Assyrians. Just as Ahaz had *hired* Tiglathpileser to come to his assistance, the same would be done by the Judeans. Though they did not have any treasures to send to him, the income from the taxes they would pay to Assyria would be more valuable. The king of Assyria would

be "*the hired razor*" that would shave the head and the hair of the feet, and would even sweep away the beard.

The fact that in the narrative of chapter 7 the prophet speaks in the third person, while in chapter 8 he speaks in the first person, shows that the former narrative is not the work of the prophet, but was written by one of his disciples, and the latter contains the prophet's own reminiscences. The events of the seventh chapter occurred at the beginning of the Syro-Ephraimitic invasion to the time when Jerusalem was being invested by the allies, and those of the eighth chapter happened during the siege. We notice that in the seventh chapter there is merely a reference to the intention of the allies to overthrow the Davidic dynasty and enthrone the son of Tabeel (7.6), while in the eighth chapter the Judeans had already allied themselves with the allies and rejected "the waters of Shiloah" (8.6). The former is of a political nature, and there is the paramount question whether Ahaz should appeal for help to Assyria, while in the latter the question is whether the Assyrians would arrive in time before the fall of Jerusalem. Seeing that the Judeans had no reason to be friendly toward the ruling classes and to assist them in provisioning Jerusalem for the siege, the food there was not plentiful. The government, on the other hand, firmly trusting upon the speedy arrival of Tiglathpileser, was not prepared for a long siege, and when it lasted longer than expected, the allowance became scanty, and the besieged suffered from want. The people who suffered most were of course the poorer classes. The prophet's aim was to encourage the people not to despair.

The opening lines of chapter 8 read: "And the Lord said unto me: 'Take thee a great tablet, and write upon it in common script: *Maher-shalal-hash-baz* (The spoil speedeth, the prey hasteth).'" It had to be a large tablet, because it was intended to be exposed in Jerusalem, so that the people should read it. But the legend without inter-

pretation was obscure and ambiguous, as it could mean that Jerusalem would be speedily despoiled by the allies. However, if the people interpreted it in that way, they would prefer to suffer and to hold out rather than surrender to the allies. If, however, they interpreted it to mean that the allies would soon be despoiled by Assyria, there was still more reason for not submitting to the allies but waiting for the arrival of Tiglathpileser. This may have been the reason for making the legend ambiguous. Nevertheless, Isaiah on exposing the tablet gave the right interpretation that it meant the despoiling of the allies. In order that his opponents should not denounce him as a fakir who delivered an ambiguous oracle, the most trustworthy witnesses had to testify to this fact. Therefore he said: "And I will take unto Me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah" (8.2). Now it is noteworthy that the roots of מָהַר and שָׁלַל do not occur in Aramaic, and are pure Hebrew, while the roots of חָשַׁב and בָּנָה, though occurring in Hebrew are also Aramaic. Thus the legend was written in Hebrew and Aramaic, as חָשַׁב בָּנָה is a translation of מָהַר שָׁלַל. It would then seem that the legend was intended for the king of Israel and the king of Aram, denouncing their fate. If the prophet had not given his own interpretation of the legend, we would say that it was addressed to these kings and meant: "Hasten and plunder!" as long as you have a chance; do it quickly and clear out before the Assyrians catch you, and you will have no chance to leave the country. We would say that it was intended to frighten their Judean partisans not to trust upon the support of the allies, as they themselves would be in dire straits. Therefore they should try to make peace with the Davidic dynasty, before the arrival of the Assyrians.

There is nothing said whether the prophet did comply with the divine command and put up such a tablet. But from the contents of this chapter, we see that the prophet

was bitterly opposed by the inhabitants of Jerusalem during the siege (8.11-20). If so, may we not assume that he did put up such a tablet and his opponents destroyed it? Therefore another sign which was more enduring was necessary. This is the meaning of the prophet's narrative: "And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bore a son. Then said the Lord unto me: 'Call his name *Maher-shalal-hash-baz.*'" (8.3). Such a name must have caused general surprise. If the prophet had not been absolutely certain of his announcement, he would not have given his own child such a queer name, as no father would make a laughing-stock of his own offspring. This living sign caused more sensation than the tablet publicly exposed. The prophet was now even more certain of the fulfillment of his prediction than before. In putting up the tablet, no time was given for the defeat of the allies. But now he publicly announced that "before the child shall know to cry: My father, and: My mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be carried away before the king of Assyria" (8.4). But if Damascus and Samaria should be overthrown and become Assyrian provinces, will the Judeans who allied themselves with them share the same fate? If this should happen, the Davidic dynasty would be the loser, as its kingdom would be restricted to Jerusalem. This would have been small comfort to the people besieged in Jerusalem, if Isaiah had made such a prediction. This prophet, like his contemporary Zechariah, was quite certain that the rebellious Judeans would return to their allegiance as soon as they heard about the arrival of the Assyrians, and would turn against the retreating allies. Thus nothing would happen to them in the present. Jerusalem will still continue to be the capital of Judah. But they will not escape with impunity altogether. It was after all due to their defection that Ahaz appealed to Assyria for help and acknowledged its suzerainty. If they had remained loyal, Ahaz would have waited

for the arrival of the Assyrians, as for their own sake they were bound to relieve him, as we have seen. Therefore the prophet announced that the Judeans in the near future will learn the difference between "the waters of Shiloah that go softly" and "the many and mighty waters of the Euphrates," which in rising inundate the country, and sweep everything away. Isaiah compares the house of David to the softly and sluggishly flowing waters of Shiloah. This spring was far from providing Jerusalem with sufficient water for drinking and irrigation purposes. The people would suffer from thirst, if they should rely upon it. They were forced to collect water in cisterns during the rainy season, in order not to be parched with thirst during the summer months. So also the government of Judah was far from being satisfactory to protect the people against the oppression and injustice committed by the ruling classes. However, it was due to its weakness, being impotent to restrain them from wrong-doing and to punish them for their misdeeds. It certainly did whatever it could to protect the poorer classes, but it was not enough. The only accusation that could be raised against the house of David was weakness. Surely it was not in the interest of the government to impoverish the people at large, as they were the tax-payers.

There were two parties in Jerusalem, one pro-Assyrian, and the other pro-allies. The former saw the only salvation of the state in the submission to Assyria, and the other in making peace with the allies and joining the confederacy. Isaiah, certain of the speedy downfall of the allies and of succor on the part of Assyria, was opposed to both parties. By reason of the stand he had taken, he was denounced and abused by both parties. He explained his position: "The Lord spoke thus to me with a strong hand, admonishing me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying: 'Do not call a confederacy all that this people call a confederacy, neither fear ye its fear, nor account it dread-

ful' " (8.11-12) . It is exceedingly difficult for an individual to stand between two parties and not join either of them. Man as a rule follows the line of least resistance, and the prophet would gladly have joined one of these parties, if the Lord would not have kept him back with a strong hand. The prophet repeats here again what he told Ahaz that Rezin and Pekah are merely the ends of smoking firebrands that will soon be burned out: This is not a real confederacy of nations that unite themselves to defend their independence, but of two ambitious individuals, and is mere sham, and there is no reason to fear them. Now it would have been a sanctification of the name of the Lord, if the people had firmly trusted upon His promise that the designs of the allies shall come to nought. This the prophet proclaimed after having denounced the Judeans for their disloyalty: "Make an uproar, O ye peoples, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear all ye of far countries; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall be brought to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand; for God is with us" (8.9-10) . But what right had the people to claim that God was with them, if they did not trust upon Him? Therefore the prophet continued his address: "The Lord of hosts, Him shall ye sanctify; and let Him be your fear and your dread" (8.13) . If Jerusalem had been saved from the hands of the allies, it would have been ascribed to the fact that it was the residence of the Lord, and His name would have been sanctified. The prophet goes on: "And He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem" (8.14) . The last part of this verse is exceedingly obscure. If the people of Jerusalem accept the prophet's exhortation and fear the Lord, why should Jerusalem or the Lord become for them a gin and a snare? It has been well said that an interpretation: "He shall be a

sanctuary for those who sanctify Him, but to others a gin and a snare," would create an antithesis which does not exist in the text. Hence we would be inclined to read: "And He shall be for a sanctuary for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but for a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, and a gin and a snare to both the houses of Israel." The meaning of this passage seems to be that the Lord would place all kinds of hindrances in their way to prevent them from carrying out their designs, and at the same time He will entice them to continue the siege until the arrival of the Assyrians, whereby they will be ensnared and caught by them. The prophet concludes his prophecy: "And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken" (8.15). He may refer to the retreat of the allies. We have seen that on this occasion, the people of Jerusalem sallied out of the city and attacked, whereby a good many lost their lives or were taken captive.

We have seen that the prophet did not know that from the very outset Ahaz had sent an embassy to Tiglathpileser to Armenia imploring him to come speedily to his relief. Isaiah became acquainted with this fact after he had given Ahaz a sign that within a relatively short time the allies would be overthrown by the Assyrians. But the people did not know that the king's negotiations with Assyria had been unknown to Isaiah. If he knew them, the fulfillment of his prophecy could be explained in a natural way, and there was nothing divine about it. He could have easily foreseen the arrival of Tiglathpileser to save a state that was his own dominion, from the allies, and their severe punishment was a foregone conclusion. By this act of Ahaz in not informing him that he had already entered into negotiations with Assyria, Isaiah's reputation as a God-inspired prophet must have greatly suffered. His expectation, that the fulfillment of his prophecy would strengthen the people's belief in the Lord, was far from being realized.

On the contrary, they actually saw in him a charlatan, who wanted to make them believe that his predictions were due to divine inspiration. Thus their belief in the Lord was actually undermined by his very activity. Ahaz, in not informing the prophet of his submission to Assyria, discredited the prophet in the eyes of the people, and they lost their belief in the Lord. They put no trust in the assurance of the prophet that the designs of the allies will never come to pass. We have said that the poorer classes who suffered most in the besieged city were in sympathy with the Judeans. But even some of the partisans of the Davidic dynasty were inclined to enter into negotiations with the allies. Now we have said that the tablet with the legend *Mahe-shalal-hash-baz* may have been destroyed by the prophet's opponents and this was the reason that he named his own son *Mahe-shalal-hash-baz*. However, it may be that due to their unbelief in the prophet they threatened to destroy it, if he would not remove it. Therefore the Lord told him: "Bind up the attestation and seal the oracle in the presence of My disciples" (8.16). It means: let it be preserved until the prediction is fulfilled, and then they will acknowledge thee as a true prophet.

However, in the meantime the prophet was jeered and mocked at. The siege lasted longer than expected, but the prophet did not lose his belief that his oracle would be fulfilled, though it was long in coming, and said: "But I waited for the Lord who was hiding His face from the house of Jacob, and I looked for Him" (8.17). He saw in the long siege a divine punishment for their unbelief in the Lord who was hiding His face from them. But he was convinced of the fulfillment of his oracle, that the Lord would not leave him in the lurch. Otherwise he would have been discredited forever in the eyes of the people. Therefore he said: "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and wonders in

Israel from the Lord of hosts, who dwelleth in mount Zion" (8.18). The prophet and his children are the living words of the Lord, and He must make true His own words, if the Lord dwelling in Zion is a true Living God. But the people in their despair had lost their belief in the prophet and his oracles. Nor did they believe that the Lord was hiding His face from them because of their unbelief.

People in antiquity did not enter upon any enterprise without consulting oracles. The people of Jerusalem were no exception. They did not rely upon the living mouthpiece of the Lord, as a living man might distort the truth for some reason of his own. They preferred to consult the dead who are not interested in human affairs, and thus are trustworthy. An oracle coming from them they considered superior to the word of a living prophet. King Saul, before the battle of Gilboa, seeking in vain an oracle from the Lord as to the issue of the Philistine attack, turned in his despair to necromancy, the practice of which he himself had abolished, as "he had put away those that divine by a ghost or a familiar spirit out of the land" (I Sam. 28.3, 9). He went to consult the witch of Endor, asking her to bring up Samuel out of the netherworld. Notwithstanding the irreligious character of this kind of divination, he received a true oracle. There can be no doubt that the author of the Book of Samuel who transmitted this narrative must have believed that the Lord may announce His will even by necromancy, notwithstanding the fact that its practice was not approved of by the religion of Israel. If this biblical author held such a belief, it must have been current in Israel even among the most religious people, and there is no reason to maintain that it was not shared by Isaiah. Necromancy was forbidden in the Mosaic Law (Lev. 19.31; 20.6; Deut. 18.11), because its practice fostered ancestor worship which was tantamount to idolatry, but there is nowhere stated that an oracle obtained by means of it was not true. Being

certain of having received a true oracle from the Lord, the prophet was equally certain that if the people should obtain an oracle by means of necromancy, it would be a confirmation of his own oracle. Otherwise, his own oracle from the Lord would be false, and this was inconceivable. The prophet, therefore, said: "And when they shall say unto you: 'Seek unto the ghosts and familiar spirits, that chirp and mutter: should not a people inquire of their God in behalf of the living by the medium of the dead?' " (8.19). The people meant to say that if a living man announces an oracle in the name of God, there is nothing miraculous about it, and there is no evidence for its divine source. It is different if a dead body or an image of a dead person chirps or whispers, which is supernatural and thus testifies to its divine origin. Hence they said: Let us find out by means of necromancy whether Jerusalem shall be taken by the allies or be relieved by the Assyrian army, as Isaiah promised. Is it not a general custom that people inquire of the deity by means of necromancy? Why should we not act like other human beings, instead of relying upon the words of a prophet? Let us learn the will of Jahveh in accordance with the general custom, and then know whether the prophet was right or wrong. Isaiah is quite willing to accept this challenge, and exclaims: "By the oracle and attestation of it, if they should not speak according to this word, there is no seeking after Him" (8.20). The prophet meant to say, according to our reading and interpretation: If the dead, whom the people are eager to consult concerning the outcome of this war, should not say the same as the oracle I received from the Lord, I am ready to admit and to confirm by an oath that there is no reliance upon the Lord and that it is useless to consult Him! He could express himself so emphatically, as he was absolutely certain that the Lord would not leave him in the lurch, so that the necromantic oracle would be identical with his own which he had received from the

Lord. The final events justified his firm belief in the Lord: Jerusalem was relieved by the arrival of the Assyrian army, and the allies suffered the fate he predicted for them. But the people still remained unconvinced of his divine mission. Not the prophet but Ahaz was given credit for his farsighted policy of invoking the aid of Tiglathpileser. The people went from bad to worse. Corruption, injustice, oppression, and all other social vices became even stronger than before, aggravated by the practice of idolatry. Isaiah's prophetic activity was in vain, and he could rightly say: "This people hath made fat its heart, and hath made its ears heavy, and hath shut its eyes."

THE END

Date Due

NEW BOOK	ADULT		
FACULTY	DEC 8 '65		
FACULTY	FEB 8 '66		
da 11 '39	DEC 11 '65		
Ap 4 '39	FEB 11 '66		
Ag 1 - 4	NOV 7 '69		
FACULTY	NOV 17 '69		
JE 3 '59	MAY 21 '73		
FACULTY	MAY 12 '74		
DEC 11 '65	MAY 21 '73		
DEC 21 '62	FEB 22 '76		
JUN 11 '63	JUN 11 '63		
JUN 2 0168			
MAR 2 5 '69			
MAR 5 '64			
MAR 18 '64			
APR 6 '64			
